THE GUIDE TO COMICS • 49 **PORTFOLIOS** WHAT EVERY ASPIRING ARTIST NEEDS TO KNOW

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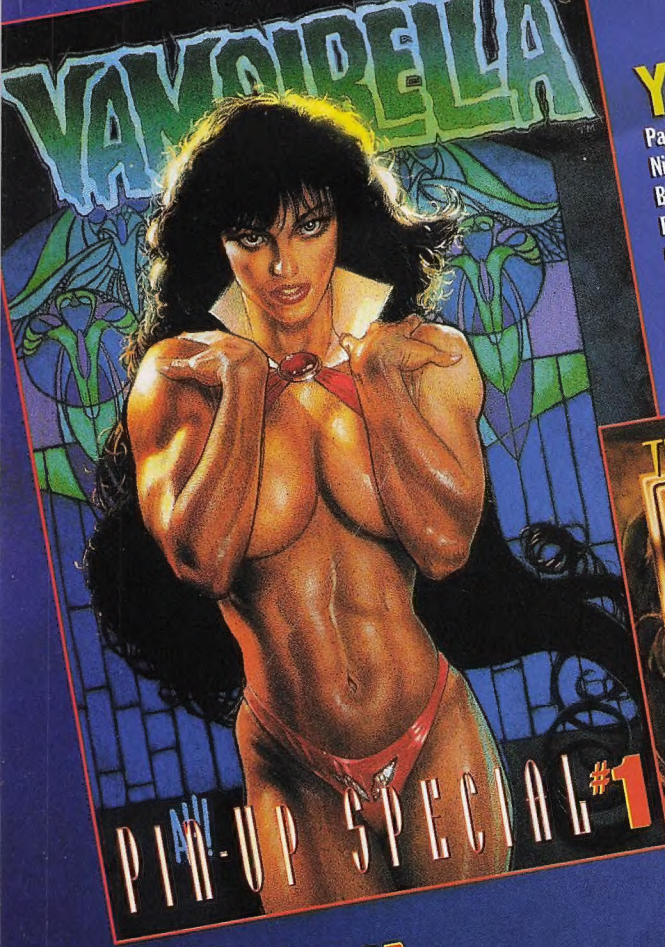

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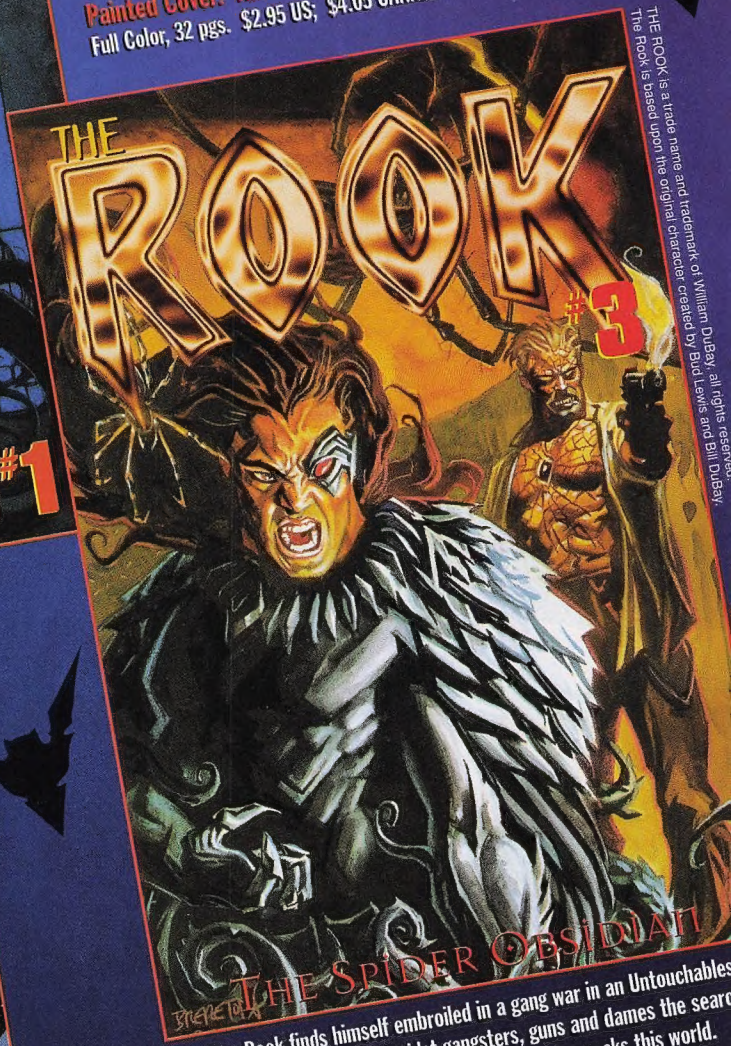

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Number 49
SEPTEMBER 1995

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JOE MADUREIRA'S LIFE AMONG MUTANTS. PAGE 32

VAMPIRELLA ™ & © Harris. PHOTO: Gabe Palacio.

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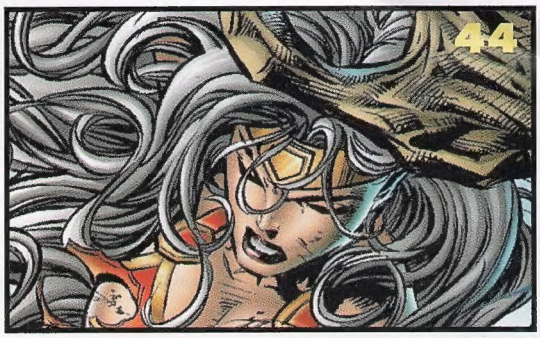

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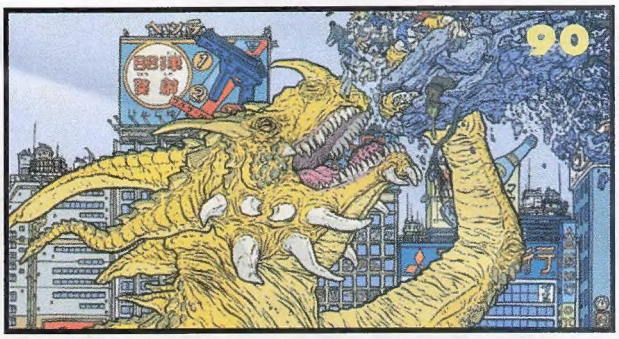

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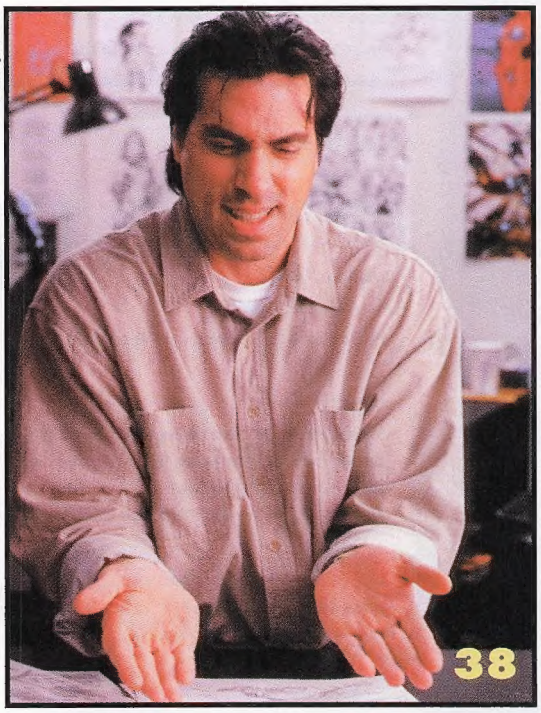

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WIN!

A MORTAL KOMBAT 3 ARCADE GAME!

Even if you're like the ugliest dude this side of Willie McGee, you'll be sure to score with the babes if you own this puppy! Get movin' to page 66!

from the top

SHOW AND TELL

Y'know, I always like going to comic conventions. The people you meet there are truly unique and interesting. So far on the show circuit this season, I have been able to meet the "new" Vampirella model, Brian and Francisca Pulido (of Chaos! Comics fame), Billy Tucci (*Shi*), Jeff Smith (*Bone*), Avengelyne (the former Vampirella model) and many others. So hey, if there's a convention in or near your town, you can probably meet these folks and other one-of-a-kind people. And if we're there, make sure you stop by and say hello.

This issue, we have a kickin' cover by *Uncanny X-Men* teamsters Joe Madureira and Tim Townsend, colored by the swell fellas at Fleer. We interview Joe and get into what he's got cookin' with those rascally mutants. Also, do all you budding artists wanna know how to prepare your portfolios? We've got all the answers in here. Wanna know more about Mike Deodato Jr., Roger Cruz, Denny O'Neil, Frank Miller, Geof Darrow and Vertigo's eight rising stars? It's all in here, too. And I can't forget the free Evil Ernie mini-comic and exclusive Marvel OverPower Metal Print offer. (Geez, you sure get your money's worth of plugs in *Wizard*, by golly.)

You also may have noticed something different about this issue: It cost you a little more. Unfortunately, it also cost us a little bit more to produce it. In case you haven't heard, there's been a massive increase in paper costs over the past few months, and something had to give. But we will still deliver the highest quality product that you expect, with even more bang for the buck.

On a side note, I went to Toronto on the weekend of June 2 to 4. It was purely a business trip, of course. I had to do a voice-over for the upcoming *UltraForce* animated series (I played a thug, who, of course, gets his butt thoroughly kicked), and I had to play in the world premiere *Ice Age* Tournament at the Canadian Comics and Card Spectacular, where the *Magic: The Gathering*—*Ice Age* expansion game debuted. Over 700 people played in the tourney—I made it to the third round. If you play the *Magic* card game, you'll find *Ice Age* to be really great—it adds a couple of really interesting features to the game (make sure you read all about it in *InQuest*).

Next month is The Biggie—our huge 50th issue. I can't believe that after 10,000 pages, and hundreds of free cards and inserts, *Wizard* is 50 issues old already—amazing! As for what we've got in store, there's this big thing with Todd Mc—um, I can't say that yet. Well, don't miss the humongous cover with Spi—yikes, can't get into that, either. I'd be nuts not to mention the Spaw—er, sorry. Suffice it to say, the next issue of *Wizard* will do what no issue has ever done before. I'll leave it at that. I hope you join us.

See you then.

Stay cool,

Gareb S. Shamus

P.S. I can't wait—Brian Pulido promised me that his animatronic Evil Ernie can cut off my head at a future con—I'm so excited!

masthead

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Magic Words

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McLauchlin shuts the hell up!

I'll keep my introductory babble to a minimum this month, because we've got a ton of great letters to get to. So many cool letters have been coming in that we're actually looking to do a couple of expanded Magic Words in the near future.

Boy, you should have seen the postage on this first letter...

Wizards,

Verily, thou hast incurred the wrath of mighty Thor! The Thunder God bested in single combat by Superman in *Wizard* #39's "When Titans Tussle"? I say thee, a thousand times, nay! Why, even in Hela's dark domain, Superman's weakness against magic is well known. One stroke of my enchanted mallet of uru against his head of steel and, as they say in Midgard, that's all she wrote.

Thou speakest of battle savvy? Before the Kryptonian was but a mote in his sire's loins, the Prince of Asgard was slaying trolls and storm giants with naught save bare hands and a warrior's spirit.

Fah! What knowest wizards of combat anyway? Thou art likely in league with my evil half-brother Loki, or perhaps vile Lorelei. May the All-Father's eight-hooved steed trample thee to dust and silence thy prattling for all time!

Thor Odinson
The Golden Realm
As told to Malcolm Knox
APO AA

Y'know, I always thought of Thor as more of the man-of-action type. I never really pictured him sending complaint letters.

Anyhoo, Thorsie, I dig ya, but I've still got to give the nod to Supes if you two were to go toe-to-toe. You're a tough customer, but you've been known to let your emotions get the best of you from time to time. Supes is better at keeping his wits about him in battle, and that gives him a slight edge.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have now reached the X-Men Dance Party-A-Go-Go segment of our letters page...

Dear Wizard,

There seems to be some confusion regarding Scott Summers, a.k.a. Cyclops. Since I am gifted with insight and wisdom into all things imaginary, I'll enlighten you people on some of the more confusing aspects of the snazzy blue X-Man.

1) During the "X-Tinction Agenda" storyline, readers witnessed Scott and his brother Havok trying to pound each other's brains out using their mutant powers. But since they're related, their powers had no effect on each other. These same readers then wondered how the Summers brothers could beat the holy mackerel out of Stryfe, Scott's son's clone, during the "X-Cutioner's Song."

The reason for this should be clear to anybody who knows genetics. You see, siblings are more closely related to each other than they are to their parents. If closeness of relation is the reason for Cyclops and Havok's immunity to each other's power, it stands to reason that while Scott and Alex can't hurt each other, they can still kick the stuffing out of their kids, who are, genetically speaking, more "distant" relatives.

2) In *Wizard* #44, reader Amit Punjabi asked how those ruby quartz glasses hold Cyclops' eyebeams back. You morons told him that because the glasses are red, they reflect those beams back to his face. WRONG! An opaque red object reflects the color red, but a transparent red object would transmit the color red, allowing Cyke's eyebeams to move right through.

So how do ruby quartz glasses work, you ask? I think that Scott's mutant power subconsciously "turns off" when he sees through

THE NEXT PHASE IN HUMAN EVOLUTION MAY NOT BE HUMAN AT ALL.

A three-issue *Elseworlds* miniseries about genetic engineering, age-old enemies, and Marilyn Munro.

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ruby quartz. While he's doing his eye blast thing, he sees everything as red. When he has the visor on, the light passes through red ruby quartz to his eyes, so he's still seeing everything as red. Therefore, his brain thinks he must already be blasting and the eyebeams get "turned off." This means that if the ruby quartz was, say, 10 feet away from him instead of right in front of his face, he could blow it to pieces. It also means that Scott could hold back his eyebeams if he tried really hard.

Andy DeBorja
Bronx, NY

Interesting theories, Andy. I like 'em. But lay off the "moron" cracks, huh? I mean, I was a political science major in college. I should have known better than to mess with physics.

Dear Wizard Guys,

I've noticed a problem with the X-Men. It's not a continuity problem, it's a taxonomy problem. Homo Sapiens and Homo Superior do not represent different species. A species, by definition, is an intermating group of organisms. Since mutants (Homo Superior) can have kids with normal humans (Homo Sapiens), they are not a different species, but rather a different breed.

Francis Serpa
Novato, CA

Man, have we gotten highbrow in the past couple of months! I guess that whole Descartes thing in *Wizard* #47 really got the ball rolling.

Anyway, for those of you without a Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary at home, "taxonomy" refers to classification of species, and methinks Marvel's got a small problem here. They look at man and mutant as two separate species, and that difference is the basis for the fear and hatred of mutants in the Marvel Universe.

I couldn't find any biological text at home to check your species definition, Francis (oddly enough, I did find my old high school physics book), but I think it holds water. For example, mules—the offspring of a donkey and a horse—are sterile and therefore not considered a species. Marvel mutants should not be considered a separate species.

But many people theorize that the mutant hatred in Marvel Comics is simply an allegory for the real absurdity of racial and ethnic hatred that exists in our own society. It is truly sad that as "civilized" men and women of the late 20th century, many of us still have prejudices against others based on things as insignificant as skin color or if someone's last name ends in a vowel. Chances are, Marvel knows full well about its taxonomy problem but keeps the difference in order to continue teaching this important lesson.

Dear Wizard,

Is it pronounced "Mag-neat-o" or "Mag-net-o"?

Keric & Gavin Morinaga
Cypress, CA

It took two of you to write this question? It's pronounced "Mag-neat-o."

Dear Wizard,

In an old issue of *Wizard* you asked readers to think of a codename for Jean Grey. I thought about it and came up with "Mind Bolt." She can read minds and uses bolts to penetrate minds. So please print this.

Montrae Brannon
Aurora, IL

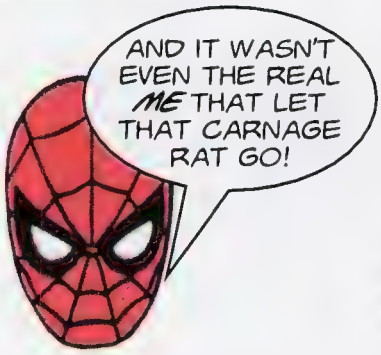
All right, it's printed. "Mind Bolt" is a pretty lame codename, but still a lot better than "Jean Grey." (Boy, that whole secret identity thing sure does you a lot of good, don't it, Jean?)

Dear Wizard,

What does the "M" on Bishop's face stand for?

Jason Witt &
Richard Orlikowski
Winona, MN

It stands for "mutant." Bishop had it put there due to his status as a mutant policeman in the alternate future that he comes from.



Dear Wizard,

I write in response to letters from Ben Ziegler and others in *Wizard* #40. Mr. Ziegler claimed that Spider-Man was a coward for not killing Carnage during the "Maximum Carnage" storyline, and preventing him from hurting innocent people.

Mr. Ziegler et al. have been judging Spidey's decision teleologically—that is, based on the consequences of his actions—rather than deontologically, whether his actions were right or wrong in and of themselves. The traditional standard for judging decisions is deontological, because most people agree that if an act is wrong, it doesn't matter what the outcome is. You shouldn't do it. The ends never justify the means.

Spider-Man did the morally correct thing by allowing Carnage to live. To kill is wrong. So, being the moral person that he is, Peter Parker decided to let Carnage live. Whether this makes him a hero or not, I do not know. Maybe a hero is someone who ignores the right or wrong of a thing and just does whatever needs to be done. I prefer to think that a hero is someone who can make these tough decisions in an often morally bewildering world.

Doug Singsen
Providence, RI

Geez, the ol' Webster's sure getting a workout today. And it looks like this particular letters page controversy will never die out. Letters continue to pour in with opinions on whether Spidey should have killed Carnage or not when he had the opportunity. These days, opinions are decidedly against Spider-Man being a killer, even if the killee would have been Carnage. And yes, Virginia, most readers do consider Spidey a hero.

Dear Wizard,

All right! *Wizard* #45 kicked ass! It was hilarious! Did you just decide to make #45 the all-humor issue?

But how about this Derek D'Avril guy (Wizard Profile, issue #45)? His interview made me want to avoid this guy's work. He's only one year older than me and he's already got a bright future in the comic industry. Meanwhile, I'm barely scraping by in college! Be thankful for small favors, D'Avril, you mucousy wart on the butt of humanity!

Michael Hoover
Lubbock, TX

Yes, *Wizard* #45 was the April Fool's issue (even though we hardly mentioned it in the book, but we did in the advertisement for it). We did a number of humorous features, including running a *phony* Wizard Profile. There really is no Derek D'Avril. We dreamed him up and design assistant Jonathan Marsland posed for the photo. We thought it would be fun to see if anyone would

Pen Pals

Get in touch with your fellow comic fans! Send your name, address, age, gender and three favorite titles to Pen Pals, c/o the Magic Words address on page 16. **NOTE:** Please write your **age** clearly on the envelope. Hey, make a friend!

Billy Settle
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Likes: All London Night Studios titles, *X-Men, The Crow*

Shinai
Age: 18 Sex: Male
#10 Livonia, Unit 25
Scarborough, Ontario, Can. M1E 4W6
Likes: Certain male and female vampire titles, *X-Men*

Magneto & Spider-Man ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

bite on the bait. Whoa! Feels like a strike! Looks like we've got a Lubbock Hooverfish to reel in! (And not just readers—a few publishers, who will remain anonymous, also took a bite.)

Dear Wizard,

I want the truth! Truth about what, you ask? I want the truth about Jim Shooter. It seems that a lot of people in the comic industry hate him. They accuse him of lying about what he did for creators. I have read many times that during his tenure as Marvel editor-in-chief, Mr. Shooter increased rates for artists, returned artwork to their rightful owners and started royalty programs. I also have read the speech that Frank Miller gave at the Diamond Distribution Seminar (June 12, 1994), and he seems to imply that Shooter didn't do anything for creators. They can't both be telling the truth and they can't both be lying. I suggest that Miller and Shooter come together to debate it and come to a conclusion on the subject.

David Wuu
Upland, CA

Nice notion, but I doubt that it would ever happen. Peter David and Todd McFarlane had a rather interesting and well-publicized debate at ComicFest '93 in Philadelphia, but big-time comic debates are incredibly rare events. Still, Frank Miller and Jim Shooter are both recognized as very opinionated guys and very effective public speakers. It would be interesting to see. Just don't hold your breath.

Dear Wizard,

You know, I've just about had enough of your Spawn-bashing, McFarlane-dissin' editorial bent. Can't understand why so many fans buy *Spawn*? Think we're all a bunch of idiotic, comic-speculating teenagers who know nothing about good art or what constitutes a well-written story?

Well, I'm here to give you *Wizard* fools a clue. I'm a 36-year-old published author and professional artist who has been supporting himself through those means for over a decade. I stopped collecting comics when DC and Marvel went on their multi-part, crossover, buy-every-book-we-produce-or-miss-out-on-the-storyline rampage. I knew they were giving the customer a raw deal. Instead of upgrading the quality of their books, they instead chose to go the route of mass-marketing and merchandising.

Their choice wasn't evil, but it also wasn't the cup of tea for hundreds of thousands of comic readers, myself included. Then McFarlane came along and, with his Image cohorts, bucked the system with an in-your-face campaign that warmed the soul and excited the imagination.

Spawn, ah, Spawn. McFarlane kept his creation clear of crossovers and multi-part epics. No time-traveling, universe-saving, reality-altering, overly grandiose sagas. *Spawn* is a story about people, about characters, about side avenues and subplots. *Spawn* is a story about betrayal, frustration, mystery, rage, love, honor and an outcast trying to find his place in the world. Spawn is a man of good intentions whose actions are manipulated by forces he has no way of understanding.

I'm not saying that the art or writing is the best in the business, but there is something you boys at *Wizard* fail to comprehend. If the story is true and if you tap into ideas that strike the heart of the reader, the public will forgive and overlook minor problems. McFarlane does all this for $1.95 and does not force you to spend $39 a month just to keep your grip on the storyline.

Besides all this, *Spawn* runs the most read-

able letters page in the business. McFarlane is a true character and has brought a fresh voice to the industry. I don't always agree with him, but I don't hold it against him or judge his book by that measure.

So carry on, McFarlane! I and countless others wait breathlessly enthralled as we watch you carry the banner into battle against Marvel and their evil empire. And *Wizard*, lighten up on *Spawn*! That book and its creator are the best thing to come around since Jim Steranko.

William J. Murray
Moody, TX

"The most readable letters page in the business"? In *Spawn*? Then what the hell is this? Chopped liver? Surely you jest.

"The best thing to come around since Jim Steranko"? I think you've somehow forgotten a few people like Frank Miller, Howard Chaykin, Jim Starlin, Bill Sienkiewicz, Alan Moore, Tim Truman and Dan Jurgens.

Oh, well. I'm running this letter to show the world that there are always two sides to every story and that I do have something of a concept of equal time. Every man has his own opinions, and no one's are any more wrong than anyone else's. OK, so G. Gordon Liddy's are a little more wrong.

That having been said, it's time for our obligatory McFarlane joke of the month...

Oh, Great Wizard People,

Can Todd McFarlane count?

Brian Clough
Newton, NJ

Yes, but only to 18. Then he has a bit of trouble, until he reaches 21. Go figure. You'd think the guy would take off his shoes to count on his toes after 10, and not have any problems until he hits 20. Hmm...maybe he forgets to count his thumbs.

To all those at Wizard,

I don't know about anybody else, but I'm getting sick of characters who are big, violent, mean-looking, carry big guns and other sorts of large weapons and kill everybody. I think we need more comic characters that are normal humans who weigh less than 200 pounds and rely more on brains than brawn to stop criminals.

Darren Bullock
Seattle, WA

Me too! Looking for an alternative to today's hulking monstrosity of a humanoid? At least artwise? Check out *anything* penciled by Gil Kane. The guy is a master of the human figure and always draws people that actually look like people. And he can draw dinosaurs like nobody's business, to boot.

Dear Wizard,

Over the past few months, comic readers have witnessed many milestone occurrences, from the deaths of major characters to sense-shattering events like Valiant's "Birthquake." And I, for one, love it all!

Think about it: Who wants to spend between two and five dollars for a comic if nothing interesting happens between the covers? I could see spending maybe a dollar for a regular soap opera-esque comic, but more? No way!

I love comics but I've also got bills to pay. Guess which comes first? So if publishers won't lower cover prices, they should at least continue creating big, milestone storylines.

Ken McWilliams
Nichols, SC

OK, but please remember that many interesting things *can* happen between the covers without a blockbuster event. Some of those things are called "characterization" and "plot."

It seems most people enjoy the big comic events. Most of them are well-executed. The only harm comes when a major shake-up replaces any semblance of real storytelling. If you buy comics only for the sense-shattering events, you're probably buying them for the wrong reason. How many of these can a publisher throw at you before you need a little background to make you actually care about the characters you're reading?

Wizard,

Who treats us to the KA-THOOMs, BLAM BLAM BLAMs, SNIKTs, AARRGHHs and other sound effects which grace our comics each month? Is it the letterer or the penciler?

David Spinks
Indio, CA

Depends. It can be either, and sometimes it's even both in the same comic. Some comic professionals have even become rather famous for their sound effects. Artist Walt Simonson (of *Thor* and *Star Slammers* fame) and letterer Ken Bruzenak (notably on *American Flagg!*) spring immediately to mind.

Dear Wizard,

Hey! Is Clark Kent's middle name really "Jerome," as indicated on an episode of *Lois and Clark*? And since it was revealed that Doomsday is from Krypton, does that mean he is vulnerable to Kryptonite?

Jeremy Grossman
Indianapolis, IN

According to the folks at DC, Clark Kent has no middle name that's ever been revealed in the comics. As to your Doomsday question, our DC spies would only slyly hint that the Kryptonite question will be addressed in the Superman titles sometime soon. (Ooooo...)

Dear Wizard,

Could you please clear something up for me? I kind of remember a "Reflection on a Superhero" album from the '70s that had songs on it about Spider-Man. I ask everyone I see at conventions about it, but they just look at me like I'm out of my mind. If there ever was such a record, could you please tell me about it so that I won't wonder if it was just a pre-teen hallucination like Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny or Richard Nixon. Thanks!

Tom Fink
Claremore, OK

Oh, it's real, all right. 'Round about 1975 or so, *Rock Reflections of a Superhero*, a Spider-Man album, hit the nation with the force of a runaway chipmunk. Stan (Music Lover) Lee narrated between Spidey-oriented songs like "No One's Got a Crush on Peter" and "Dr. Octopus." Stan even appeared in print ads for the album, telling the world that, "It's an honest-to-Aunt-May rock-and-roll album that's the answer to any disc jockey's prayer!" Heck, it's even got David Sanborn on sax! This musical missive was available on album, cassette and the ever-popular 8-track.

Dear Wizard,

I'm from Pakistan and a steadfast reader of your magazine. I was wondering if your

Nathan Palace
Age: 14 Sex: Male
519 Montezuma
San Antonio, TX 78207
Likes: *The Maxx*, *Spawn*, *Venom*

Aaron A. Stencel
Age: 20 Sex: Male
1095 Alden Nash
Lowell, MI 49331
Likes: All 2099 titles, Superman titles, X-titles

Charity Dees
Age: 14 Sex: Female
950 Becton Rd.
Havelock, NC 28532
Likes: *X-Men*, *Spawn*, *WildC.A.T.s*

Largouët Bruno
Age: 18 Sex: Male
40 Rue Christine de Pisan
22000 Saint-Brieuc, France
Likes: *WildC.A.T.s*, X-titles, *Spider-Man*

Michelle Paszkiewicz
Age: 21 Sex: Female
3006 N. Allen Ave.
Chicago, IL 60618
Likes: *X-Men*, *WildC.A.T.s*, *Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi*

Kevin W. King
Age: 23 Sex: Male
4810 W. 95th St.
Inglewood, CA 90301
Likes: Super-titles, Bat-titles, Spider-titles

Jordan Petit
Age: 15 Sex: Male
324 Margo Lane
Mc Minnville, TN 37110
Likes: *X-Men*, *Uncanny X-Men*, *Wolverine*

Victor Almodovar
Age: 16 Sex: Male
P.O. Box 47
New York, NY 10009
Likes: Superman books, Batman books, *Spawn*

Todd McFarlane photo by Al Ortega. Spider-Man ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group.

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magazine is distributed to south Asiatic countries like Pakistan. A lot of people go to a lot of trouble to keep up with your mag. Do you take part in the distribution process to other countries or is there an exporting authority that takes care of that?

Karam Elahi
Islamabad, Pakistan

I checked with our circulation department and they said that we sell an average of seven (no kidding!) copies of *Wizard* per month in Pakistan. Curtis Circulation, a large U.S. distributor, sells to Pakistani newsstands that carry English-language magazines. Your best bet for catching *Wizard* every month in a foreign country is to subscribe.

Dear Wizard,

I recently bought *Watchmen* #1-#12 for $10. They are in very good condition. Are they worth the 10 bucks I paid for them?

Onett Soriano
Passaic, NJ

Yep. *Watchmen* is one of the coolest comic stories of all time, and the collected trade paperback edition (which, barring an original cover, has no exclusives) carries a $16.95 cover price. You have done well, my son.

Dear Wizard,

How on Earth could Dazzler ever beat Galactus?

Jason Kafader
Corning, CA

I don't know. And you know what the worst part of all this is? In her first three issues, Dazzler took on (and bested!) The Enchantress, Dr. Doom and Galactus! That's quite the heavy-hitting lineup! And this was back when she was the blue-face-paint, roller-skating, disco-singing, little-light-creating Dazzler. What a crock. She should have a hard time taking on Paste-Pot Pete, much less the Devourer of Worlds.

Dear Wizard,

As we were sitting around the latest issue of *Wizard* drinking Rock-a-Dile Red Kool-Aid, we decided to send you our ideas for a Marvel/DC "shared history" crossover.

First, an evil clone of Jason Todd goes back in time to pick up a copy of *Detective Comics* #38 so he can see what a real Robin does. Unfortunately, Charles Xavier has picked up the last copy, so Jason gives him a vicious thrashing and Xavier dies. This allows Lex Luthor and Apocalypse to take over America. They use the Justice League of America to subjugate (that's an SAT word!) the rest of the heroes. Only the X-Men—led by Azrael—are strong enough to take on Luthor's forces, who are lead by the Horseman Holocaust (the Milestone version).

Meanwhile, Riddler and the X-Ternals are sent to steal the M'krann Crystal. They fail, and everyone starts experiencing temporal anomalies. Past versions of current heroes start to take over until Thanos drains the M'krann of all its power to charge the Ultimate Nullifier. He uses this to take over the universe and rid us all of those damn Legionnaires. Meanwhile, Guy Gardner gets in a tussle with Wolverine and forcibly removes his hand. Superman and Hulk have their own comic, which is one long fight scene from beginning to end, just like an average issue of *Badrock and Company*.

Finally, Galactus comes to Earth and consumes the planet. All the heroes are apparently dead, but it is revealed that the whole planet and everyone on it were clones created by the Jackal. The Jackal then gets his ass kicked from here to the Crab Nebula by Captain Kool-Aid, who appears out of nowhere. That's the end.

Steve Popovnak & Geof Mudge
Mildenhall, England

Whoa! That's a good one. I don't know what they put in Rock-a-Dile Red Kool-Aid in England, but it sure sounds different than the mix we get here in the U.S. One question, though: where's Darkseid?

Cross-dressing Encouraged!

We've been telling you for the past couple of months that the fourth annual *Wizard* Halloween Costume Contest is up and running, and unless you're some kind of unfun weenie that can't get into the spirit of things, you should be doing some heavy-time thinking as to what you're gonna dress up as. Heck, you can be anything: superhero/heroine, villain/villainess, science fiction character, cartoon character—whatever floats your boat. We're even springing for some awesome friggin' prizes! Like what? Like the best costume takes home an Aiwa stereo system (complete with CD player, speakers and all that other neato hi-tech stuff), along with CD movie soundtracks to *Halloween, The Exorcist, Friday the 13th, The Day the Earth Stood Still, Bram Stoker's Dracula* and *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*, paperback copies of top-shelf horror novels *Salem's Lot, It, Watchers, The Silence of the Lambs*, and even Edgar Allan Poe and H.P. Lovecraft collections (Hey, some of that highbrow readin' stuff can be pretty scary, too!), videotape copies of *Alien, John Carpenter's The Thing, Jaws, The Exorcist, Night of the Living Dead* and *Ernest Scared Stupid*, and heck, we'll even chuck in one o' them dimension-piercing Ouija Boards! There'll be some Runner-Up Prizes, too, but they all sorta pale in comparison to the Grand Prize, so we won't list 'em.

Anyway, here are the rules and stuff:

1) Dress up like anything you want—comic book character, video game character, something out of a book or movie, whatever (the more original your getup, the better your chances of winning).

2) The actual costume itself must be homemade, but you can add store-bought items to accent your outfit. For example, you can't go out and buy an Alien mask for your Alien costume, but you can use a real gas mask for your Golden Age Sandman costume, *comprende*?

3) Have someone photograph you in your costume (Polaroids will **NOT** be accepted!). Then write your name, age, full address and phone number on a small piece of paper, attach it to the back of the photo (don't write on the photo!) and send it to the address below. All photos must be color prints, and we suggest taking multiple shots with multiple poses, just in case some pictures suck. And remember that magic five-letter word: focus!

4) To be eligible to win, we must receive your photo by September 1, 1995, so you'd better move yer butt!

Send your entry to:
COSTUME CONTEST IV
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-0118

Derek Oswandel and Roger Baugh, aside from being two of the Empire's finest, were last year's second place winners.

Stormtroopers ™ & © LucasFilm Ltd.

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THE COUNTDOWN CONTINUES... EC

4...

J.P. LEON
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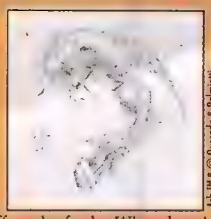

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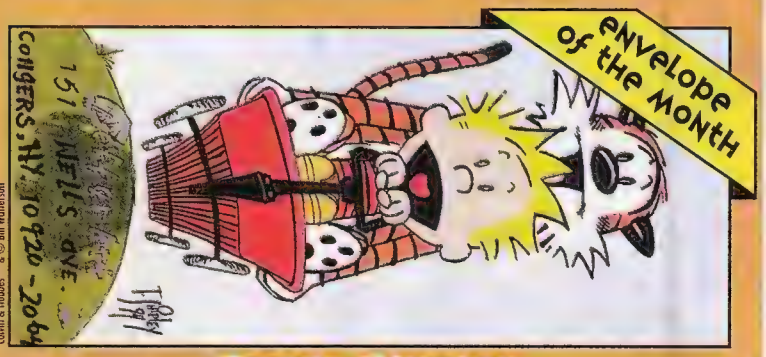

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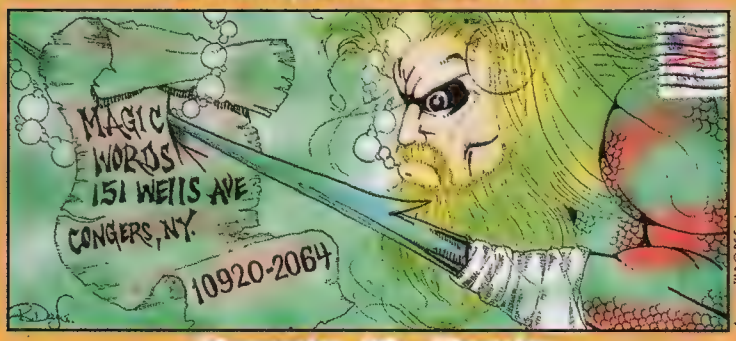
Canton, Ontario, Canada



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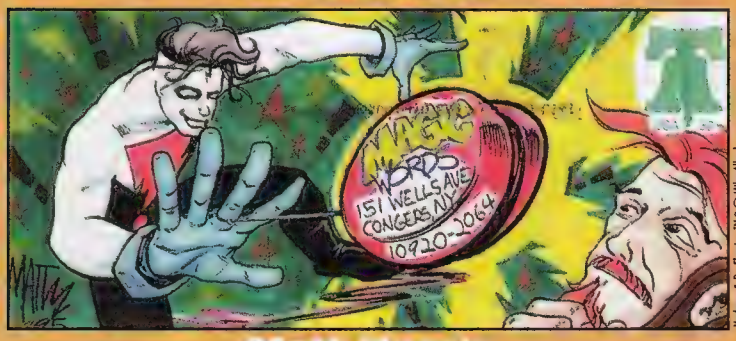
Bernie M. Doyle
Oak Harbor, WA



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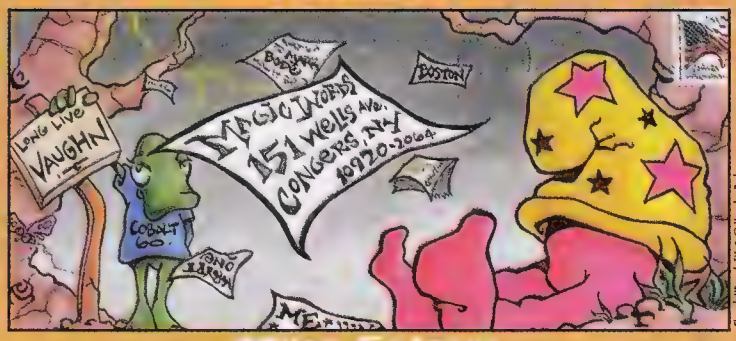

Cheech Wizard™ & © Vaughn Bode

Mike Estep
Boston, MA

WildStar™ & © Al Gordon & Jerry Ordway

Dear Wizard,

Are there any plans to bring back the old Image title *WildStar*?

Troy R. Trucke
Anchorage, AK

Well, we called *WildStar* editor Bud Shakespeare and he said, "You bet your sweet bippy there are! We've got an ashcan slated for August and a new ongoing series that starts in September."

We like Bud. Actually, we like anyone who uses the word "bippy."

Dear Wizard,

I was wondering what it takes to be a comic book drawer.

David Comstock
Kenmore, NY

Well, for starters, it would be nice if you were part of a whole chest of drawers. You could provide more storage space that way. You should, at the very least, be a desk drawer. Aside from that, you should be 6 1/2-by-10, which is standard comic book size. And since old Golden and Silver Age books are slightly larger, it would be nice if you were actually a few inches bigger than that.

Dear Wizard,

Accompanying *Wizard* #45 was a Dark Horse mini-comic, *Revelations* #1. If you look on the inside back cover, you see an advertisement for four Dark Horse publications, one of which is X #14. Is it just me, or is X-14 a bath cleaner?

Kyle Davis
Greencastle, PA

Yes, and now it's also an all-purpose kitchen cleanser, too! And look for *Adventures of Formula 409-Man*, coming soon from Dark Horse.

That's all the space we've got. See you next month,

Jim McLauchlin

Jim McLauchlin, who now takes care of promotions and publicity 'round these parts, probably knows more about sausage than anyone at Wizard Press.

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FABIAN NICIEZA: Ex-X-Writer

Photo by Al Ortega

X-Men *writer Fabian Nicieza is leaving his mutant friends this August.*

If you were the writer on the number one comic book, just coming off a very successful storyline, connected to a mega-hit Saturday morning cartoon show and a fantastically popular toy line, there's just one thing you'd do. Quit.

Quit?

"I left for the reasons why people always leave titles like this," said Fabian Nicieza, ex-*X-Men* writer, whose last issue is *X-Men* #45 shipping in August. "It's monetarily rewarding, but it's not creatively rewarding. It wasn't working for me, and I felt I had taken enough money and not had any fun.

"I was always thrilled with the opportunity to work in comics. I'd wanted to write comic books since I was a kid," Nicieza continued. "But I wasn't thrilled anymore, and I didn't like that."

So what *is* Nicieza doing for fun? He's finishing up the two-issue *Two-Gun Kid* limited series due out in early fall for Marvel as well as writing a Spider-Man series dealing with Peter and Mary Jane's preparations for their baby's birth, tentatively titled *The Last Spider-Man Story*, with art by Darick Robertson. In addition, he has committed to at least the first four issues of the new monthly *Captain Marvel* starring the Legacy character from *Silver Surfer* launching in October.

Scott Lobdell, writer of *Uncanny X-Men*, will script *X-Men* until #50.

"Fabian has been a primary mover in the X-Men Universe. I'll miss the give-and-take that took place working with him on a monthly basis," Lobdell said.

As of #51, *X-Men* will be under the attentive pen of Mark Waid (*Flash*, *Captain America*). "This is a very exciting opportunity," said Waid. "I hope to be a credit to mutants everywhere."

And just because Fabian is off a regular book, don't expect him to stray far from the X-Universe. "[X-Men Editor-in-Chief] Bob Harras called me about a week after I quit, and asked me to do a *Sabretooth* one-shot. I'm interested in doing special projects. I get along with all these people, and I would like to continue to work with them."

—Ruth Morrison

DARK KNIGHT, MAN WITHOUT FEAR to Meet

The world's greatest detective and the personification of blind justice will meet early next year as Marvel and DC team up to present *Batman/Daredevil*, according to its writer D.G. Chichester. As of press time, DC and Marvel neither confirmed nor denied the project.

Creative duties for this crossover fall on former *DD* creative team Chichester and artist Lee Weeks to formulate this close encounter of each company's major street-level crime fighter. Greg Wright (*Batman*) will color the finished product.

"The whole story has this duality thing going," Chichester said. "Two-Face has come to New York specifically to find Mr. Hyde, because he has need of him for his master plan. It's a dark twist on technology, instead of the usual drug lord, street gang, inner-city route used for these characters." Naturally, the deuce-obsessed criminal is pursued by his caped-and-cowled nemesis.

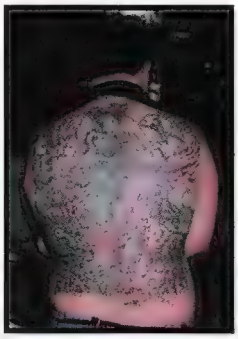
Daredevil's been through so many changes in recent years, Chichester was quick to note that the character appearing in this story will be the "classic" Daredevil: "The red, Wally Wood-designed suit, the billy club, Matt Murdock and Foggy Nelson working in the law office."

According to Chichester, plans call for *Batman/Daredevil* to ship in the first quarter of 1996.

—Patrick Daniel O'Neill

Silver Age DC space hero Adam Strange hits rock bottom. "I will shoot fanboys for food," said fallen hero just before heading to infomercial audition.

Jesus tossed out of recent comic convention for making copies of Action Comics *#1 from newspapers. "Hey! What's up? They loved it with the water-to-wine bit," said Savior of all Gentiles.*



New exclusive distribution deals hurt small press companies. "Somebody, please read Sweatman *#4 off my flabby back," pleaded left-out publisher.*

Long-Awaited BATMAN: MAN-BAT Flies Into Comics Stores This August

Batman: Man-Bat finally arrives at your local comics retailer in August, after being announced nearly three years ago in the fall of 1992.

Written by Vertigo standout Jamie Delano, and painted by John Bolton (*Black Dragon*), the series was originally intended to be a part of regular continuity, but has been retrofitted as an Elseworlds title because the Batman powers that be felt the interpretation was not in their continuity.

As for the long wait, Bolton said that going into this project he had several prior commitments. When it came time to complete *Batman: Man-Bat*, Bolton insisted on producing the best work he could, which takes a fair amount of time when painting a 146-page mini-series.

According to Delano, Batman is a major player in the mini-series, but the focus of the story is Man-Bat. As a creature of genetic engineering, Man-Bat delves deeply into a world of bestial surreality and finds that the main cause of the animal kingdom's woes is humanity. When he stumbles upon a means to destroy humanity, Man-Bat must make a choice to embrace either his bestial or human side. Delano described the series as "dark and depressing with a fair amount of black humor and irony tossed in for good measure."

BATMAN & MAN-BAT ™ & © DC Comics

More bats for your buck in *Batman: Man-Bat*.

Bolton claimed the only reason he accepted this assignment was that it was a chance to do a side of the Batman mythos that hadn't been explored. "I wanted Batman to be more demonic, more menacing than he's been in the past," he said. One of the keys to Bolton's portrayal of Batman is his depiction of the trademark cape. "I've always thought that Batman's cloak would almost be part of him. If he's interrogating someone, the cloak should enfold his victim to intimidate him."

Batman: Man-Bat is a three-issue Prestige format mini-series with the first issue shipping in August.

—Christopher Griffen

WILDSTAR Returns to Image in AUGUST

The two-year wait for a continued exploration of the characters and concepts of *WildStar* will end in August, when an ashcan version arrives in stores.

Al Gordon, writer and inker of the upcoming *WildStar* monthly, hopes that the ashcan will tease readers and rekindle interest. *WildStar* #1, which ships a month later, will feature two variant covers.

The original mini-series was promoted as a time-travel story during which the main character dies in the first issue and also touted fan-favorite Jerry Ordway's name as penciler.

Gordon said, while Ordway is busy and not involved in any of the current WildStar plans, he does communicate with Ordway regularly regarding progress of the series, and that Ordway could return when his schedule permits. Gordon said that he has had time these past two years to think about the characters and the development of the monthly book, and that he aims to "keep an experimental twinge to the book—a 1960s *Forbidden Planet* mixed with *Aliens* and a bit of Superman."

Bringing over yet another Marvel penciler into the Image stable, Gordon has great confidence in Chris Marrinan's (*Nova*) work. Gordon will ink Marrinan's pencils as well as write the monthly.

With the comics market widely reported to have been on the skids recently, does the timing really seem right for the *WildStar* monthly? Gordon said that the market seems to just be turning around, and he is banking on the market's continued improvement. "Interest seems high for the ashcan so far," he said, "and that interest is evidence that the time is ripe for the return of WildStar."

—Henry Colonna

WildStar (above right) and his co-creators Al Gordon and Jerry Ordway (scowling in back).

WILDSTAR ™ & © Ordway and Gordon. Photo by Al Ortega.

Pros React To BATMAN FOREVER

According to *Wizard*'s nearly scientific study, virtually the entire danged comics community saw *Batman Forever* during its premiere weekend, helping it set a first-weekend box office record of $53 million that broke the record set by *Jurassic Park* two summer's ago. Here are some early reactions:

Merlo Alquiza (*Prophet*): I attended the Hollywood premiere and it was like the Academy Awards. I went to get popcorn, and ahead of me in line was Cindy Crawford. Then I went to the bathroom, and Wesley Snipes is beside me talking around me to Steven Baldwin. When I left, I bumped into Quincy Jones. They were all like regular people, and they were talking about the movie! The audience loved it, and I thought it was great. It never let up, and Val Kilmer makes a much better Batman than Michael Keaton."

Kurt Busiek (*Astro City*): "I'd rather see them try to adapt the source material than the medium—the medium won't translate. Emphasizing bright colors over character concepts and plot logic seems pretty contemptuous of the material to me. I kept checking my watch to see when it was going to end."

Peter David (who wrote the movie's novelization): "There were some fundamental weaknesses in the script that the direction and acting couldn't surmount. But they produced exactly the movie they set out to produce. They wanted to save the Batman franchise and make him more friendly than in the first two. *Batman Forever* is much more evocative of the TV show. The script also managed the amazing feat of taking Two-Face and making him one-note."

Dan Jurgens (*Spider-Man*): "It was pretty enjoyable, but I thought Val Kilmer was too wooden, especially as Bruce Wayne. To me, Michael Keaton had more of a twinkle in his eye. But Robin was a breath of fresh air. He showed how important Robin is to the legend of Batman. Without Robin, this movie would have been awful. And I loved the mention of Metropolis!" Jurgens also noted how much seemed inspired by the TV show: The hidden escape chutes, Riddler's gizmo, the Robin/Chase death trap, Robin's "holy rusted metal" line and the tilted camera angles. "Overall, it was a lot of fun and less claustrophobic than the first two."

Ron Marz (*Green Lantern*): "It was much better than *Batman Returns*, but it suffered from the same problem: It was eye candy. Visually, it was great, but the story was a mess. But it's probably as good as we can expect from a major Hollywood movie with huge licensing needs. It's a juggernaut."

Heidi MacDonald (editor, *Disney Adventures*): "The movie is really beyond good or bad, it kind of just happens. I felt like I'd been trapped in a pinball machine. Val Kilmer was the Batman of my dreams; the scenes of him plummeting, cape billowing, were excellent. For the first time, I actually got a sense of Batman's power and heroism."

Brian Pulido (*Lady Death*): "It was like being in an amusement park. It had killer camera moves, lighting, art direction and costumes. The cast was great. Nicole Kidman may make a good Lady Death, and Joel Schumacher can direct [an] Evil Ernie [movie] any time."

Alex Ross (*Marvels*): "I enjoyed the movie's look, it was very exciting and beautiful. The circus just blew me away, with the huge statues and everything. I was very entertained, but if I'd stopped to think about the plot, I'd have gone insane. The only negative is that the Batman movies affect how the entire industry decides to make superhero films. They don't respect the material or realize that these movies don't have to be huge-budget epics. It could have been like *Batman: Year One* and been made on a shoestring budget, too."

Mark Waid (*Flash*): "I loved it! I haven't enjoyed a comics movie so much since *Superman: The Movie*. Sure, you have to turn your brain off at the door. But unlike the first two, this one had a plot, and I'm appreciative. I thought the Riddler's master plan was over the top and not something we'd do in a comic book, but chances are too great that you could go into a comic shop, throw a stick, and hit a comic with a sillier Master Plan. I'm going again, I liked it so much."

—Craig Shutt

All characters ™ & © DC Comics. Photos courtesy of Warner Bros.

MARZ's Big Plans Mean Leaving X-O

Ron Marz is cutting back his workload to include only one monthly book—DC's *Green Lantern*—so that he can work on several high-profile projects in the coming months. The biggest of those is his new baby, which was due in early July.

"The baby prompted my decision to leave *X-O Manowar* [with issue #50-O] and *StormWatch* [with issue #24]," he explained. "There was no real unhappiness with [*X-O*], and I remain good friends with Bart Sears and Andy Smith [*X-O*'s artists]." In fact, he has already developed plotlines that will run through issue #58. Having brought *StormWatch* into synch with WildStorm continuity as of #24, Marz decided it was a good time to take his leave of that book, as well. "I needed a break," he admitted.

Sears and Smith both are committed to *X-O* for the long term, said a spokesman for Acclaim Comics, but no replacement for Marz as writer had been named at press time.

Marz selected *Green Lantern* as his continuing project because "the monthly grind of two issues a month on *X-O* was too much for me to maintain," he explained. "But I've been very happy with my work on the book. I think we kicked the character in the butt and hopefully generated some interest. But I felt if I couldn't devote the required attention to it, I should move on."

Marz cut back because of two high-profile projects, one scheduled for release late in the year, another due in Spring 1996. Unfortunately, neither has been finalized, and Marz was reluctant to discuss details prior to receiving all approvals. Both, however, involve major characters that are sure to keep him in the spotlight.

Until then, he's focusing only on *Green Lantern* and fatherhood, which should be plenty. "Having a kid is going to make things funky," he admitted. "But I'm looking forward to it."

—Craig Shutt

Photo by J. Schuyler

Marz is cutting back his workload to spend more time as a daddy.

Go, Joe! Where? To Dark Horse!

After six months of speculation, Hasbro Toys has announced that its redesigned G.I. Joe line of action figures will have a comic book published by Dark Horse Comics this fall.

Hasbro's senior vice president of boys toys, Tom McGrath, said Dark Horse's track record of successful licensed properties, including *Aliens* and *Star Wars*, was a major factor in his company's decision. "They give the same attention to licensed properties as they give to their own line," he noted.

Though Dark Horse has yet to announce the creative staff or story concepts for the series, publisher Mike Richardson said, "We've got a host of high-powered creative talent anxious to participate in our relaunch of G.I. Joe."

G.I. Joe had been a popular comic book series from Marvel Comics throughout the 1980s. In 1994, Hasbro announced a major reworking of the toy line and discontinued its long association with Marvel.

That set off a round of negotiations with other publishers. In mid-1994, Image Comics co-founder Rob Liefeld announced that his Image studio Extreme Studios had secured the Joe license, although by October 1994, it was clear that no deal had been consummated.

Neither Hasbro nor Dark Horse would comment on the character designs or the story line being prepared for the relaunch.

—Patrick Daniel O'Neill

COMPANY UPDATES

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM

Cerebus art teamsters Dave Sim and Gerhard continue their Cerebus tour, this time hitting the windy city of Chicago at the Independent Comics Expo (or ICE for short). Joining them on August 12, at the Radisson Hotel at O'Hare Airport, are Steve Bissette, Evan Dorkin, Jim Valentino and a slew of others.

AC COMICS

August's release of *Femforce* #87 marks the 10-year anniversary of AC. In celebration, *Femforce* is offering a regular $3.50 version of the issue and a signed 10th Anniversary Special Edition for $10....August also launches the company's ballyhooed "Countdown to 100," as *Femforce* reaches the centennial milestone.

ACCLAIM COMICS

Ninjak will go on temporary hiatus in July and will return this fall as a three-issue mini-series: *Ninjak: Way of the Shadow Warrior*, written by Mark Moretti and penciled by Bernard Chang. *Magnus: Robot Fighter* will go on hiatus in October to return as a four-issue mini-series written by Keith Giffen....For its Armada imprint, Bill Sienkiewicz will write and pencil the four-issue sequel to *Magic: The Gathering—Antiquities War* starting in early '96. Also, a one-shot *Homelands Special* will ship in October written by Dan Chichester and painted by Rebecca Guay. Cover by Greg and Tim Hildebrandt.

ARCHIE COMICS

The landmark *Hanna-Barbera Presents* #1 brings Atom Ant and Secret Squirrel together for their first team-up in history. It ships in late August, and includes solo stories for each hero, in addition to their team-up adventure.

FEMFORCE™ & © AC Comics

BLACKOUT COMICS

Blackout Elite, a new horror comics imprint, sees *The Death of Lady Vampré* one-shot in August, with flip covers by Gene Colan and Mike Mignola....In December will be the imprint's new vampire series *Jugular*....In February, Blackout Elite will release *Gothic Mansion*, a horror anthology.

BONEYARD PRESS

X-Men Adventures and *Punisher War Journal* artist John Hebert will be adding his penciling/inking skills to *Bill the Bull* starting with issue #3, shipping in August.

BONGO COMICS

August's *Simpsons Comics* #11, which begins the title's monthly status, has Ned Flanders go psycho. Can Bart, Lisa, and Ranier Wolfcastle stop him? This issue also contains an Old West story starring Grampa Simpson.

CALIBER PRESS

August's *Inferno* #1, about the inhabitants of an enormous city made up of parts of every Earth city that ever existed, begins the latest title in Caliber's New Worlds imprint. This August release is only $2.95 for 48 pages....On the regular Caliber side in August, *Negative Burn* #26 includes a new "Alan Moore Songbook" installment and a special new short of the "Palmer's Pick" *Very Vicky*.

CARTOON BOOKS

August sees the release of the *Complete Bone Adventures Vol. 3*. This trade paperback reprints issues #13-#18, as well as the short

Continued on page 24

THE UMBRA™

The blood of the fomori drips from Mari Cabra's claws. Mewling packs of Wyrm creatures retreat before her and vanish in fear into the Umbra. She smiles, and steps sideways into her reflection: they will not escape her. Werewolves have entered into a new field of combat. Greater danger – and greater triumphs – await in the Velvet Shadow, the spiritual reflection of our world – the realm known as the Umbra.

The Umbra is the first expansion for RAGE, the balls out best-selling game of werewolf combat. With over 90 new cards, the Umbra introduces to RAGE fans an entirely new level of play, including a brand-new Quest card series, new characters such as the legendary Wahya Ohni, and a variety of novel foes, such as umbral spirits and the dreaded reality-warping Nexus Crawler.

RAGE

The Werewolf: The Apocalypse Collectible Trading Card Game

WHITE WOLF GAME STUDIO

[illegible] Werewolf [illegible] and White [illegible] White Wo[illegible] White [illegible] The card/holoprint combination is a trademark of the Upperdeck Company. All rights reserved.

SAM AND MAX Collect Themselves

The adventures of one of the oddest crime-fighting teams in comics, the "canine shamus" Sam and the "hyperkinetic rabbity thing" Max, will be collected in a single volume this fall from Marlowe & Company.

Cartoonist Steve Purcell's hardboiled anthropomorphic cops have previously been published by Comico and Marvel Comics' Epic imprint and currently appear as a series of one-page strips in the LucasArts catalog.

Purcell is in charge of art development at LucasArts. This will mark the first time all of the pair's adventures have appeared in one volume.

Purcell, who has done a new cover for the edition, said he decided to accept the Marlowe offer because "I've always had the frustration of people asking, 'Where can I get your comics?' and Marlowe approached me with the intent of collecting everything, which was always my intent. They were enthusiastic about getting the book into bookstores as well as comic book stores that carry collections."

Purcell described the concept as "a children's book for adults. The activity pages and things like that are the stuff I would enjoy in comics as a kid, but the subject matter is geared to an older audience. I'm always embarrassed in describing the premise: It's a dog and a rabbit and they fight crime—overzealous animal police."

The Collected Sam and Max will ship in September in three editions: a trade paperback at $12.95, a hardcover at $22.50 and a signed limited edition at $50.

—Patrick Daniel O'Neill

SAM & MAX™ & © Steve Purcell

Hey, where else are you gonna find a weasel on a stick?

Continued from page 22

stories that ran in *Disney Adventures Digest* and *Wizard's Bone* #13 1/2. All for $12.95!

CHAOS! COMICS

September ushers in Chaos!'s "Fall of Fear," which is cornerstoned by *Chaos! Quarterly*, an anthology series spotlighting several Chaos! characters. The 48-page #1 includes a Lady Death story by Brian Pulido and Steven Hughes (which is a prologue to her next mini-series, *The Odyssey*), plus Purgatori, Cremator and Bedlam tales by various creators. Chaos! celebrates this new title with a beautiful, 24-by-36-inch Lady Death poster of the *Quarterly* #1 cover illustration, painted by Julie Bell, and going for $5.95.

CLAYPOOL COMICS

"To Badly Go..." is the title of *Soulsearchers and Company* #14's story, a parody of *Star Trek: Voyager* in which the Soulsearchers have to guest-star on a *Voyager*-like show to avoid a lawsuit. This issue, plotted by Peter David and Richard Howell, ships in October.

COMICO/NORTHSTAR

Each of Comico's August releases will contain rare variant cards from the company's *Chrysalis: Borne of the Supernature* collectible card game. Every copy of *Elementals* #1 comes bagged with one of five different cards, and every *Oblivion* #2 ships with one of two cards. Each book also contains a special coupon; you can send the company five of these coupons, plus the one found in the *Chrysalis* Starter Deck, for a free Promotional Starter Deck.

CRUSADE COMICS

Artists George Pérez, Dan Jurgens, Jim Balent, Marc Silvestri and Steven Hughes have joined the all-star line-up contributing depictions of Shi to Book Two of the *Shi: Senryaku* mini-series, shipping in October. Books One through Three will be collected into a hardcover volume, set for December release—just in time for the holidays!

DARK HORSE COMICS

Upcoming creators to be showcased in *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor* are Peter David, Mike Deodato Jr., Neil Gaiman, Neal Adams, Mike Grell, Paul Chadwick, Rags Morales, Richard Corben, Tony Isabella, Gene Colan, Steve Rude, Faye Perozich, Jan Strnad and others. Also, check out Harlan's first letter column in #5, shipping in August.

DC COMICS

Aqua-artist Jim Calafiore will handle the penciling chores for *Aquaman* #15, rounding out his every-five-issue appearances. (He also did #5 and #10.)

EENIEWEENIE COMICS

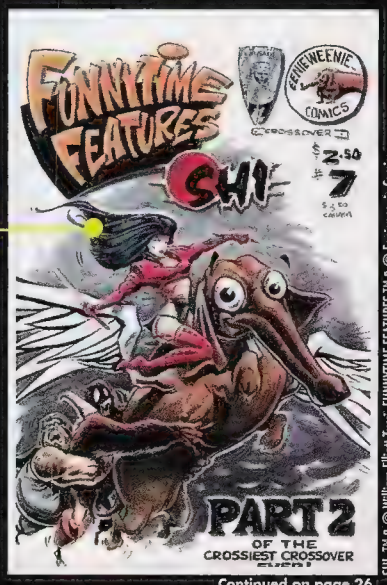
Eenieweenie's own Hoon, Inkblot, Man-Myth and the Good Nazi are teaming up with artist and Crusade Comics Publisher Bill Tucci and his character Shi for a fantastic adventure. The two-part story begins in the back of *Shi* #7 this August, and finishes in *Funnytime Features* #7, which hits the stores in September. Tucci will also be helping out with the cover to *Funnytime Features*.

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Girltalk #2 features the works of some of the hottest and newest female creators to hit the alternative scene, including Fiona Smyth, Sabrina Jones and Ursula Osteen. The $3.95 anthology ships in August....*Life in Prison*, shipping in August for $3.50, tells the true tales of three inmates—Berris Simpson, who staged a concert in jail; Sean Keating, small-time drug dealer heading towards gangsterhood; and Mark Sperandio and his "lizard brain." All of 'em are for mature folks.

FIASCO COMICS

Megaton Man is sick and tired of being



SHI ™ & © William Elliott Tucci. FUNNYTIME FEATURES ™ & © Eenieweenie Comics.

Continued on page 26

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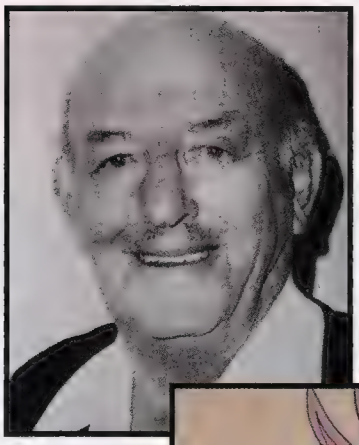
In Memoriam: FRIZ FRELENG, 1906-1995



Long-time Warner Bros. animation director Isadore "Friz" Freleng—noted for helping to develop Bugs Bunny and creating Bugs' nemesis Yosemite Sam—died May 26 in Los Angeles. He was 89.

In his 33 years at Warner Bros., from 1930 to 1963, Freleng helped in the development of the rascally rabbit, as well as Daffy Duck, Sylvester and Tweety, Porky Pig and Speedy Gonzalez. Four of his Warner cartoons won Academy Awards: "Tweety Pie" (1947); "Speedy Gonzalez" (1955); "Birds Anonymous" (1957); and "Knighty Knight Bugs" (1958). He won another Oscar for the Pink Panther cartoon, "The Pink Phink," after the Warner Bros. studio closed.

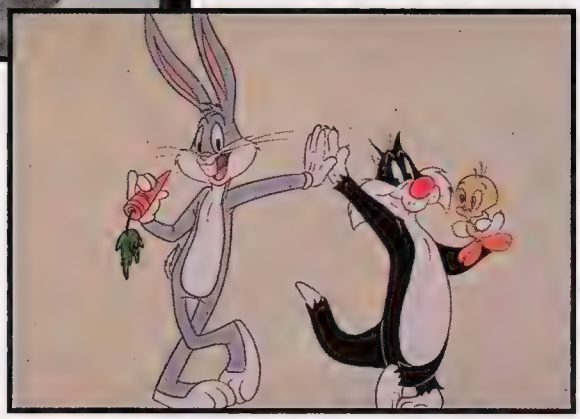
It was often joked that Friz Freleng was at the Warner Bros. animation studio from the day it opened until the day it closed in 1963...and for several years thereafter. The truth lies in the fact that Freleng joined with producer David DePatie to form DePatie-Freleng Enterprises, working out of the old Warner studios. It was there that they worked on the successful Pink Panther series of shorts, as well as numerous other animation projects, including a 1978 version of Marvel's Fantastic Four.

Freleng admitted to a resemblance to the minuscule, hot-tempered, blustering Yosemite Sam, saying, "I have the same temperament; I'm small, and I used to have a red mustache."

Many of Freleng's friends, co-workers and colleagues attended the funeral, including rival producer Joe Barbera, voice artist June Foray (who voiced Granny in the Tweety cartoons), Warner animation president Jean MacCurdy and fellow director Chuck Jones.

—Patrick Daniel O'Neill

Friz Freleng (left) with some of his old friends, from left: Bugs Bunny, Sylvester anf Tweety.



Friz Freleng photo courtesy of Everett Collection. All characters ™ & © Warner Bros.

Continued from page 24

compared and confused with that other big blue super-buffoon, the Tick. This September, in *Bizarre Heroes* #13, creator Don Simpson pokes some fun at Ben Edlund's insectile creation.

FOUR COLOR IMAGES

The show "Modern Gods: A Summer Showcase" runs from June 18 through mid-August at the New York City gallery. The show is dedicated to comicdom's most colorful heroes and villains. Artists include Alex Ross, Joe Jusko, Sam Kieth, Bill Sienkiewicz, Dave Dorman and many more.

HARRIS COMICS

The Rook #1 begins Harris' newest addition to its superhero line in August. Written by *Vengeance of Vampirella*'s Tom Sniegoski and pencilled by hot Vampi artist Kirk Van Wormer, the covers to the first two books in this time-travelling hero's series will be by *Hellboy*'s Mike Mignola.

IMAGE COMICS

• Extreme Studios

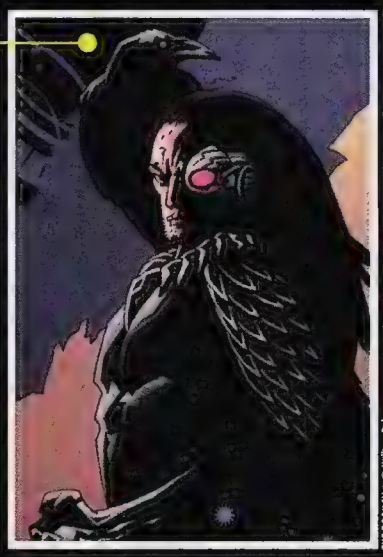
The new Youngblood roster—which was chosen by fans in the Youngblood Membership Drive listed in *Team Youngblood* #18—takes the reigns in *Youngblood* #1 ($2.50), shipping in September. Written by Rob Liefeld and Eric Stephenson, penciled by Roger Cruz (*X-Men Alpha, X-Men Omega*) and inked by Danny Miki, this marks Cruz's Youngblood debut....*Wizard* welcomes Laura Stone as Extreme's director of licensing. She'll be handling licensing acquisitions and major merchandising like toys and trading cards. Good luck, Laura!

• Highbrow Entertainment

Gen^{13}'s radical, skate-boardin' dude Grunge makes a guest appearance in *Deadly Duo* #3, shipping in August.

• Shadowline, Ink

Jim Valentino journeys into space again for the first time since his work on *Guardians of the Galaxy*, with the new ongoing series, *The Alliance* #1. The title, which tells the tale of a group of superheroes fighting to free an enslaved planet, ships in August.



THE ROOK ™ & © William Dubay

• WildStorm Productions

Debuting in August is the four-issue miniseries *WildStorms!* (Hey, any title with an exclamation point in it has gotta be good.) This anthology, which retails for $2.50, will spotlight certain WildStorm characters as viewed by a number of different creators, including Walter and Louise Simonson, Mike Zeck and others....Ron Marz and Terry Shoemaker contribute to the three-issue *Zealot* mini-series beginning this August for $2.50. Each issue sees the WildC.A.T.s' deadly Zealot and her mysterious adversary in a different time period, including ancient Greece and feudal Japan.

KITCHEN SINK PRESS

Writer John Wagner (*Judge Dredd*) and artist Arthur Ranson (*Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*) present a tale of hired killers in the English countryside, in *Button Man: The Killing Game*. This 96-page issue, which collects the full-color tale from *2000 A.D.*, ships in August for $15.95.

LIGHTNING COMICS

August's *Bloodfire/Hellina* crossover returns Lightning's books to full color, and Bloodfire to the company's line-up. This $3.00 #1 issue has the heroes team up against Slaughter House.

LONDON NIGHT STUDIOS

The *Razor: Burn* series continues on with issue #6 in November, which begins the long-awaited origin of Razor story that was supposed to run in *Razor: Uncut*, so that this important epic can be in full color. The black-and-white *Uncut* series goes on hiatus with #15.

Continued on page 28

A BLAST FROM THE PAST.

X-O MANOWAR. IN AUGUST.

53 & 54: COSMIC TURF WAR. X-O VS. ALIENS.
BY BART SEARS, RON MARZ, & ANDY SMITH.

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IMAGE Prognosticates with Extreme 3000

The future of Image Comics begins in August—and it's only 1,005 years early.

The world of Extreme 3000, created by Rob Liefeld, affects the yet-to-be in the continuity of *Prophet*, *Youngblood*, *NewMen* and *Supreme*. In this future, the western hemisphere is under martial law and policed by the fearsome Youngblood. The century-old Youngblood member Badrock, having discovered that his stone body neither ages nor can be destroyed, returns to the present with a faction of the dictatorial and hundreds-strong Youngblood Squadrons to stop a galaxy-destroying war against the Katellan race that, if not stopped, will alter the Earth's future forever. Manhattan and other New York cities have been converted into massive prisons, much like in the film *Escape From New York*, which spokesman Matt Hawkins said "very much inspired Rob in creating Extreme 3000."

"Extreme 3000 is by no means to be mistaken with [Marvel Comics'] Marvel 2099 [line of titles]," said Hawkins, Extreme Studios' director of marketing. "These four books [*Newmen 3000*, *Prophet 3000*, *Supreme 3000*, *Youngblood 3000*] form the nucleus of the Extreme 3000 Universe and will present readers with a tight, consistent world and define the look for the Image Universe in the distant future."

The series will launch with the *Extreme 3000 Prelude*, a collection of short, six-page stories formatted much like *Extreme* #0. These stories will introduce the major players and concepts of Extreme 3000, followed by the individual title debuts in September.

—Gary St. Lawrence

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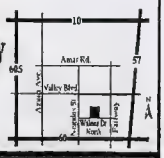

For MORE INFO Call: Jim
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Continued from page 26

MALIBU COMICS
As a part of the "Black September" event, *The All-New Exiles #∞* (Infinity) debuts that month, pairing ex-Marvel Universe villains such as Juggernaut, Siena Blaze and Reaper, along with Ultraverse mainstays Amber Hunt, The Strike (formerly Warstrike) and Shuriken.

MARVEL COMICS
Instead of running through *Iron Man*, *War Machine* and *Force Works*, the Century story slated for August will be contained in a 48-page Century one-shot. This is still to be drawn by Jim Calafiore.

MAXIMUM PRESS
Risk #1 (of 3) ships in September. First introduced in *Extreme* #0, Risk battles against dark forces and encounters the ultimate confrontation, with Furious.

MILESTONE MEDIA
All of Milestone's September-shipping books, which include *Hardware* #33 and *Blood Syndicate* #32, will have covers by Howard Chaykin (*American Flagg!*).

MIRAGE STUDIOS
It's family reunion time in *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* #12, when Raphael finally meets up with his brothers and a surprising ally—a Triceraton. This amphibious issue, which retails for $2.75, ships in September.

NOW COMICS
NOW Comics has announced that it has "temporarily suspended publication" of its line of comics. According to editor Joan Weis, NOW will completely publish the solicited three-issue *Syphons: Sygate Strategem*. There are no definite plans for the company's licensed product, The Green Hornet.

PENTHOUSE COMIX
Omni Comix #3 features the art of Alan Davis, Mark Texeira, Paul Gulacy, Terry Austin and Dave Gibbons, plus the return of Wally Wood's T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents. This $4.95, 112-page issue ships this August.

TEKNO•COMIX
Artist Art Adams has been tapped to be the cover designer and penciler to *Primortals*, starting with issue #13 in November....Crime novelist Wendi Lee writes the second story arc to Neil Gaiman's *Lady Justice*, starting in issue #4, this August....Mickey Spillane's *Mike Danger*, originally solicited as a six-issue mini-series, will continue as an ongoing monthly title....Congrats to Ed Polgardy, who's been promoted to Editor-in-Chief and will be overseeing the entire line of Tekno books!...Tekno was also awarded Best New Publisher of 1994 by Diamond Comics Distributors. Good goin'!

TOPPS COMICS
Shipping in September is the first issue of the bi-monthly *X-Files Comics Digest*, with all-new art and story, in the smaller 96-page digest format (similar to *Disney Adventures*). The creative team will be that of the ongoing X-Files comic: writer Stefan Petrucha, artist Charles Adlard and cover artist Miran Kim....*The Barbi Twins Swimsuit Comic Art Calendar* #1, due in September, has the modeling twins rendered by the likes of Adam Hughes, Julie Bell, John Byrne, Joe Linsner and others.

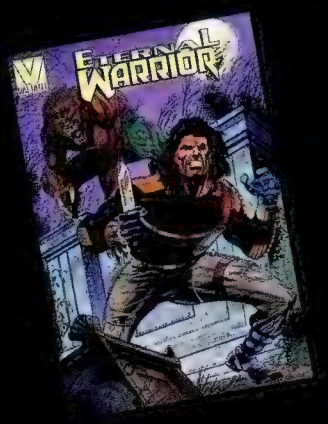
WARP GRAPHICS
Wendy Pini's artwork will be on display in San Diego at the Circle Gallery of Art, located at 2501 San Diego Avenue (Old Town) on July 30 starting at 4 p.m. The Gallery can be reached at (619) 296-2596. The exhibit will also be previewed on Saturday, July 29 at the San Diego Comic Convention held at the San Diego Convention Center....Getcher very own Elfquest Timeline Poster detailing the main events in the li'l pointy-eared freaks' history. The posters will be bound into every Warp book shipping this August....Congrats to Warp Graphics and Video Impact Productions, which won Telly Awards in the categories of non-broadcast video production, animation and music, for their "Magic For All Ages" promotional Elfquest video.

WCG COMICS
WCG Publisher Randy Reynaldo, of *Adventure Strip Digest* fame (see Wizard News, *Wizard* #42), has been awarded a grant from The Xeric Foundation. The foundation assists select comic book creators who self-publish their work. Congratulations!

SMALL PRESS OUTTAKES
Blaming a slumping market and an unresponsive fan press, Moordam Comics announced that it will cease publishing operations for at least a year. The company formerly published as Substance Comics and planned to release *Faerie King*, which it has scrapped....In August, with issue #7 ($2.75), Patchwork Press' *OZ Squad* goes back in OZ history on the Doomed Train of Mystery.

JUSTICE IS ETERNAL. IT'S JUST THE WEAPONS THAT CHANGE.

ETERNAL WARRIOR. IN AUGUST.



45 & 46: BAD MOON RISING. ETERNAL WARRIOR VS. WEREWOLVES.
BY WRITER JOHN OSTRANDER.

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CONAN VS. RUNE

Malibu Comics announced a *Rune vs. Conan* one-shot due in September to be written and drawn by Barry Windsor-Smith, the original *Conan the Barbarian* artist, whose career was launched when the Marvel Comics book appeared 25 years ago.

In *Rune vs. Conan*, Rune comes to Earth for the first time and meets Conan. The story will be part of a three-issue arc that crosses into the current Marvel series, *Conan* #4 and *Conan the Savage* #4.

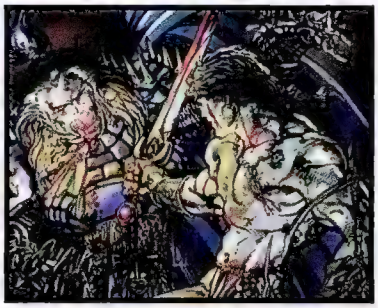
Rune and Conan are distinctly different genres, but Windsor-Smith says he had no problem combining the heroics of Conan with the horrors of Rune. "If this was back when I was [drawing Conan] 25 years ago, we wouldn't get past the splash page with the Comics Code Authority. I'm doing Conan now as I used to do then, only somewhat more sophisticated.

"Easily, 50 times in the past 20 years I've been asked to draw Conan again. And I'd say no," the artist said. "I can't believe it...25 years later I'm drawing this man again. It's like going home again."

Although nostalgic, Windsor-Smith doesn't plan to return full time to Conan. "I don't want to do it forever, I'm just doing a one-shot."

—Buddy Scalera

Barry Windsor-Smith returns to his savage friends this September.



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UP & COMING

KYLE HOTZ

When Kyle Hotz was starting out, his dream was to be in a position of having more than one project going at once. But time passes and, for Hotz, attitudes change.

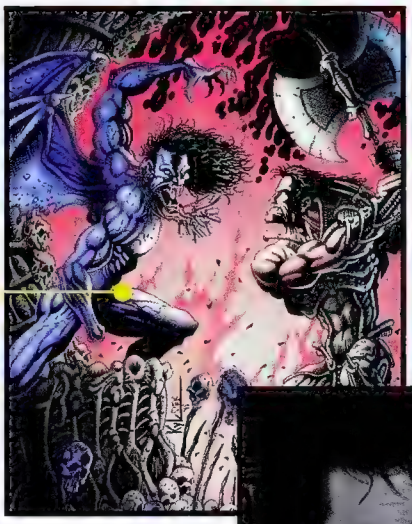
"I used to love the idea of going back and forth between projects," he sighs, "but now I wish I just had one thing I could be devoting all my time to."

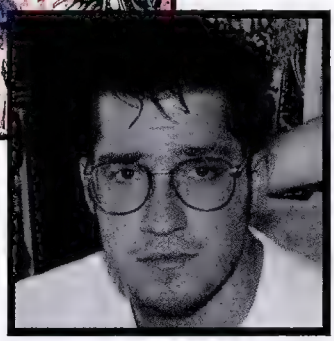
Fat chance of that happening, for while the 24-year-old Hotz is currently putting the finishing touches on July's **Curse of Rune #3** for Malibu Comics (a series he's the regular artist on), he is contemplating "some horror stuff for Kitchen Sink [Press]," and awaiting a future that includes the *Venom Super Size Special* for Marvel Comics in June and a Night Man/Wolverine crossover for Marvel and Malibu available this summer. The workload is part and parcel of a drawing style that Hotz concedes comes from recognizable lineage.

"I feel that I have a style that's particular to me but that also has a long history behind it," he explains. Despite citing horror gurus Sam Kieth, Kelley Jones and Berni Wrightson as artistic influences, Hotz believes his art "is unique enough. I do a lot of detailed stuff that's kind of crazy, and I think my stuff depends more on mood and lighting than big guns."

Hotz was born and raised in Cleveland, where his father supplied him with a steady stream of Spider-Man and Batman comics. "I wanted to get into comics at a very early age but I didn't know if I could do it, so I let it go by the wayside."

Hotz entered college to study sports medicine, but switched majors to graphic arts after the first year, soon rekindling his interest in comics. He also received some professional encouragement from a highly placed source. "I had the good fortune to meet Armando Gil, one of my all-time favorite artists, who basically encouraged me to the possibilities that I would be able to do comics."





Following graduation, Hotz, armed with a graphic arts degree and what he describes as "a weak portfolio," hit the convention circuit and "started showing my stuff."

Hotz reluctantly recalls that his first pro sale "was inking a couple of issues of *Speed Racer* for Now Comics. I felt I did a lousy job." He moved to another publisher, Northstar, where he illustrated three issues of *Cold Blooded* and four parts of *Burn* before getting a call from Steve Englehart to join him at Malibu on *The Night Man* #4-#10. He managed to sandwich in *Doctor Strange Annual* #10 for Marvel before biting at the opportunity to do *Ghost Rider 2099* #6-#12.

"Then I went back to Malibu and did a couple of issues of the *Lord Pumpkin* miniseries before I was invited to work on the revamped *Curse of Rune*. It was intimidating, especially following on the heels of what [artist] Barry Windsor-Smith had done on *Rune*, but I bit the bullet and did it."

Hotz doesn't have a dream project at this point, but he definitely has some idols with whom he'd like to team up. "I'd really like to work with [*The Crow's*] James O'Barr, and I like [writer] Mike Baron. I'd also like to work with [artists] Kelley Jones and Mark Farmer."

Hotz is humble regarding the fact that some segment of the comic book industry would consider him a star on the rise. "All I'm doing is trying to live up to the talents of the people I really admire. I'm just going to keep doing it, and just hope that people like what I'm doing."

—Marc Shapiro ☆

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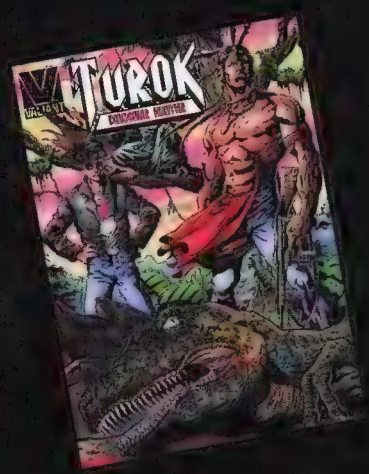
HUNT OR BE HUNTED.

TUROK. IN AUGUST.



35 & 36: BACK TO THE STONE AGE. TUROK VS. CAVEMEN.
BY TIMOTHY TRUMAN AND AARON LOPRESTI.

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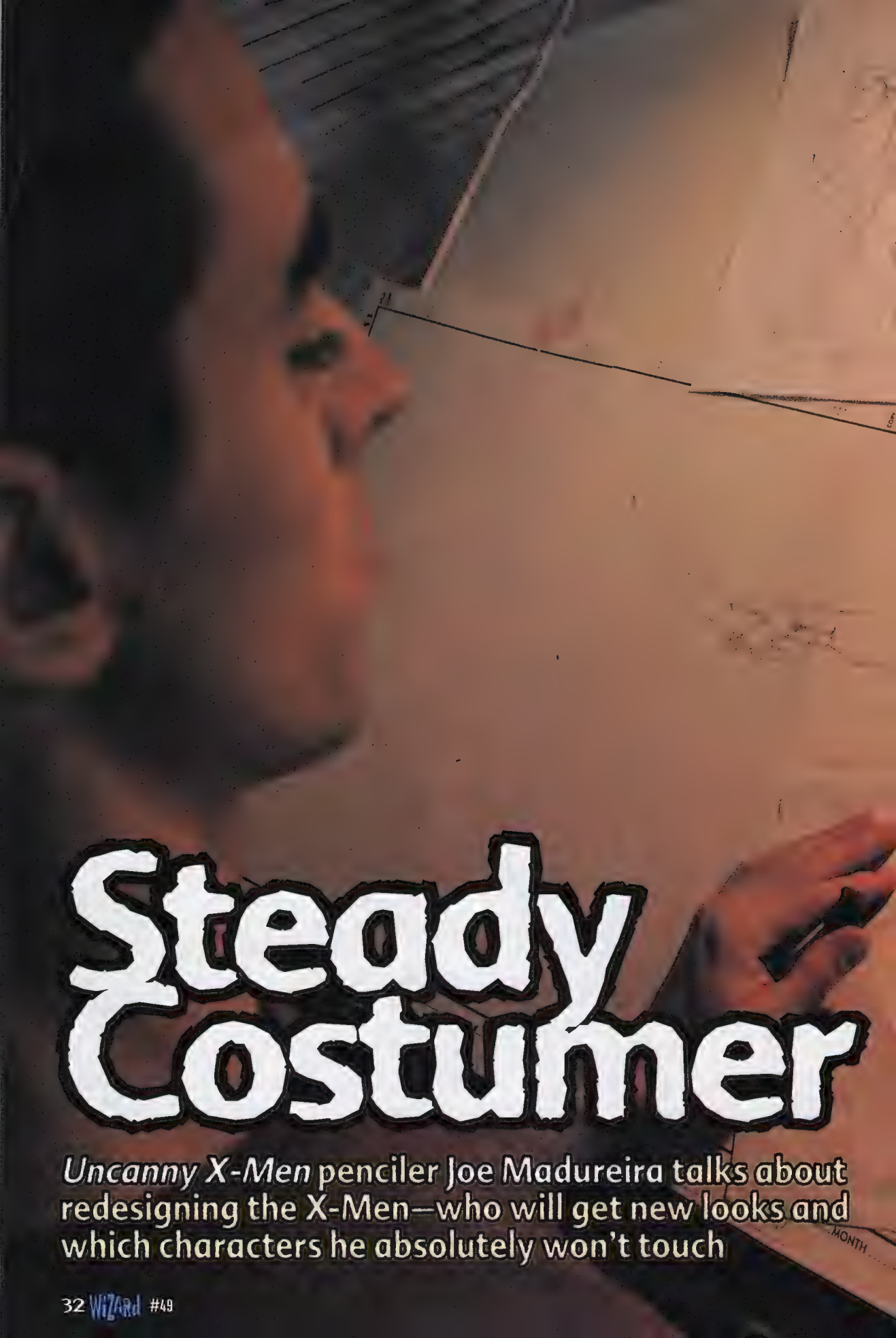

Steady Costumer

Uncanny X-Men penciler Joe Madureira talks about redesigning the X-Men—who will get new looks and which characters he absolutely won't touch

***Uncanny X-Men* penciler Joe Madureira is realizing a fanboy's dream.**

Not only is Marvel's 20-year-old *wunderkind* the hot artist on one of the industry's hottest titles, he's just gotten the go-ahead to begin developing his own vision of these pop culture icons.

"I mentioned to Bob [Harras, X-Men Editor-in-Chief] awhile back that I'd like to give the characters a new look, and he agreed to consider whatever I come up with," he says, "although he wants to do it gradually, not make a big splash like 'The New X-Men Are Here!' or anything like that. It starts in [August's *The Uncanny X-Men*] #325, where Colossus is back and wearing sort of a modified costume, but basically all I'm doing right now is messing with everybody's hairstyles and little things like that. As soon as I get some time to do the new designs and get Bob's approval, I'll begin working them into the book."

Madureira is taking a conservative approach because of editorial fiat. If he had his own way, though, the revamped X-Men would take on a very different look.

"I'll tell you, I'm so heavily into Japanese comics [i.e., manga] and animation right now that I would just love to go totally all-out in that style on the book. I am bringing some of those influences into my work, but I have to hold back because the full manga look is maybe too cartoony for the title—but it's what I'd really like to do."

That door may not be as locked and shut as the artist believes, according to Harras. "Joe's artwork today, if you'd have shown it to a lot of people just two years ago, they'd have said it was too cartoony. Just as costumes and characters evolve, I believe that individual comics have to evolve as well. Who knows where we'll be in both art and story a few years down the road?"

A fanboy's dream? You bet.

From Homework to Hotshot

At the age of 16, Madureira began paving a road to the X-Mansion. A student at the High School of Arts and Science in Manhattan, he received an internship job working at Marvel part-time. "I wasn't doing anything artistic," he admits, "just slave labor, like doing Xeroxes and passing stuff around from office to office."

Behind the scenes, though, he did what he always did: he practiced drawing. During his internship he met associate editor Mark Powers, who introduced him to editor Terry Kavanagh, who was impressed enough with Madureira to assign him an eight-page Northstar story which ran in *Marvel Comics Presents* #92. "I was very fortunate," he reflects. "I was 16 years old."

Kavanagh liked what he saw in those first pages enough to assign three more to the young artist. The first Madureira work to actually see print was the second story he drew, a Mojo tale in #89. He also did Puck and Mirage stories and several back covers for the bi-weekly anthology.

By the time he turned 17, high school senior Madureira was, for all intents and purposes, a working comics professional. He did *Excalibur* #58 and #71 and the cover to Marvel's *Excalibur vs. the X-Men Special* for Kavanagh, and then, to his astonishment, was assigned to pencil the first *Deadpool* mini-series in 1993. "That was probably the thing that established my career," says Madureira. "Deadpool was a pretty hot character at the time. I was drawing that and finishing high school at the same time. I'd come home, do my homework, then work on the book. I look back on a lot of that stuff now, and it's just so horrible, but at the time I was just blown away by the whole thing."

Madureira's work on *Deadpool* caught the eye of Image Comics co-founder Erik Larsen, who offered him *Vanguard* #3, which he accepted.

While the *Deadpool* series was edited by associate editor Suzanne Gaffney, the editor who arranged the assignment was Bob Harras. Somewhere back in those now blurry but oh-so-exciting early days–Madureira remembers–Harras came over to him in the office one day and said, in effect, "You're going to work for me when you get out of school." Following Madureira's brief Image outing, the X-editor set out to make good on that prophecy.

"I was impressed with Joe's work from the first time I saw it," Harras recalls, "The only reason I didn't give him work right away was that I wanted him to finish school. I didn't want him to think, 'Oh, I'll quit school and have a career in comics.'"

What caught his eye, Harras says, was "the bounciness of the artwork, the way the characters looked both fun and interesting. There was just something I liked about it." Admitting he sees a touch of comic vets Art Adams and Michael Golden as artistic influences, Harras continues to say Madureira "had a unique take on the characters that I found interesting. I could see some of his influences, but overall it was a fresh approach."

by Jack Curtin • photos by Gabe Palacio

All artwork and characters shown ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Scenes from "The Age of Apocalypse"

"Bob started talking with me about doing *X-Force*," remembers Madureira, "and I was pretty excited, but then he assigned me a fill-in issue on *Uncanny X-Men* and I was like, 'Wow!' I think J.R. Jr. [John Romita, Jr., then the regular artist on the title] was doing a lot of other stuff at the time and so it turned out they needed more fill-ins. I did #312-#313 and #316-#317, and then Bob offered me the book full-time. The way it worked out, the four *Astonishing X-Men* issues I did as part of the 'Age of Apocalypse' [storyline] were the most in a row I've done. There have been some fill-ins since then, because I got behind. But I'm working on #325 now, and I'm going to work really hard to stay on schedule and not miss any deadlines."

If keeping the schedule has been a bit of a problem early on, Harras feels the results are worth the struggle. "When Joe's pages come in, all is forgiven," he says. "Look, everybody misses deadlines sometimes, that's just the way it is. But this is a very, very talented artist and the quality of his work speaks for itself. My dream is that Joe can do 12 issues of *Uncanny* in a row, and that's his dream, too. We'll work on it, and if it doesn't happen, well, that's just the way it goes."

Designing X-Men

Now that he's been given the OK to update the X-Men, what might readers expect? "Well, I can tell you that I really don't like Cyclops' costume the way it is," he admits. "I liked it with the full skullcap and think it looks all wrong with his hair sticking through the way it does now."

"Actually, my all-time favorite X-Men costumes are the ones they wore when ['New X-Men' co-creator and former *Uncanny* artist] Dave Cockrum was doing the book. I wish they could all wear them again: Storm with the headpiece and the black leather outfit and long cape, Colossus with knee-high boots, Cyclops with the skullcap, Wolverine's brown and orange costume. I'd go back to that look in a minute, but I guess Bob thinks—and he's probably right—that we ought to move forward, not go back to what was already done, so I'll go in some new directions. But I don't think I'll ever come up with costumes for these guys that are as cool as Dave's. That was just perfection."

Madureira admits that it can sometimes be daunting to consider making changes in what are, after all, comics legends. "There are things you just don't ever want to change. I mean, take Nightcrawler. His costume is so cool, so perfect, that if you changed it even a little it would look wrong. Besides, when they meet me, a lot of people say that I look like one of the people in my drawings, and more than one artist has told me that the character I most look like is Nightcrawler. I don't know if that's a compliment or not," he laughs, "but it keeps me from wanting to mess around with him too much. Another guy you can't change very much is Wolverine. I mean, he *is* his costume, and I wouldn't want to be the guy to change that."

Was Harras worried about giving heroes who've been around for decades (some more than 30 years) to a 20-year-old artist to revamp? "First off, I believe that the X-Men should be refreshed every few years, just as a matter of editorial policy," he says, "and second, I trust Joe completely. He always sends in sketches before he does anything and we discuss it and come to an agreement. He has this special take on things that I enjoy. Sometimes, he'll skew something just slightly and it's absolutely great. These characters may be 30 years old, but they shouldn't

From The Pages Of X-MEN

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ULTRAVERSE®

look like they are. A fresh look by an artist who's pretty close to the reading audience in age and attitude is a good move, I'd say.

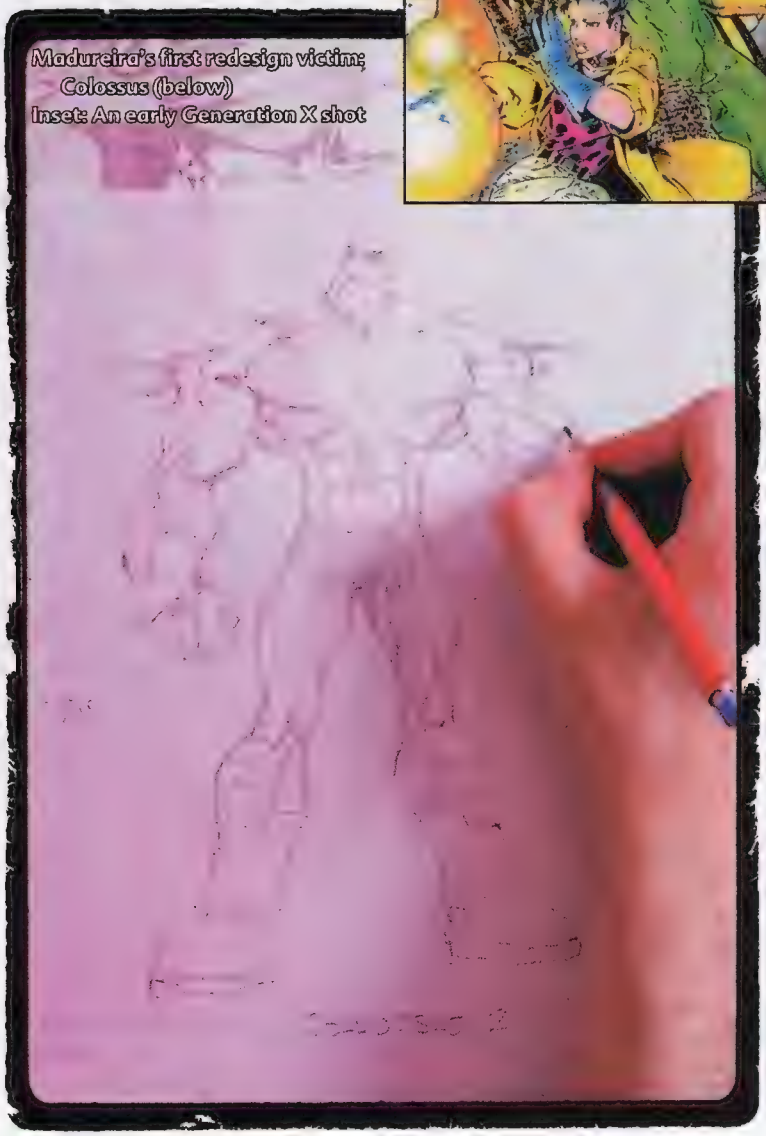
"Still, I didn't want to go right into another major change directly after the 'Age of Apocalypse,' plus I wanted to give Joe a chance to get into the swing of things and ahead of the deadlines. We'll take the time to go over everything and introduce new costumes as the storylines dictate."

Method to the Madness

Madureira did get a chance to temporarily revamp a lot of the X-characters in *Astonishing X-Men*, of course, and that work got him involved in another redesign project at Marvel, where new looks and new approaches have become the order of the day. "A lot of [different artists] are doing 'new looks' for the Avengers," he explains, "and Bob suggested that [Marvel Group Editor] Ralph Macchio let me take a crack at some of the characters. They want the Avengers to look younger and more hip and more cool. He said they should be around the same age as the X-Men, but they all look like, you know, they're in their 40s.

"I picked out a few of the characters that I've always liked—Black Widow, Wasp, Quicksilver, Scarlet Witch, Iron Man—and tried to do something different with them. In the end, though, I had to just sort of walk away from it, because I got the plot to *Uncanny* #325 from Scott [Lobdell, series writer], and I don't want to let anything keep me from being on schedule with that. I don't know if they're going to use anything I did or not, because there were several artists working on this. I think what they might do is take some ideas from different designs and put them together into something they like."

Madureira's first redesign victim; Colossus (below)
Inset: An early Generation X shot



Madureira approaches costume design "with the character in mind," he says. "Take Rogue. I want her whole body to be covered; since she avoids physical contact, it makes sense that she wouldn't wear a skimpy outfit. For that matter, I like to cover up my female characters as a general rule. I think they can look just as sexy while wearing some clothes."

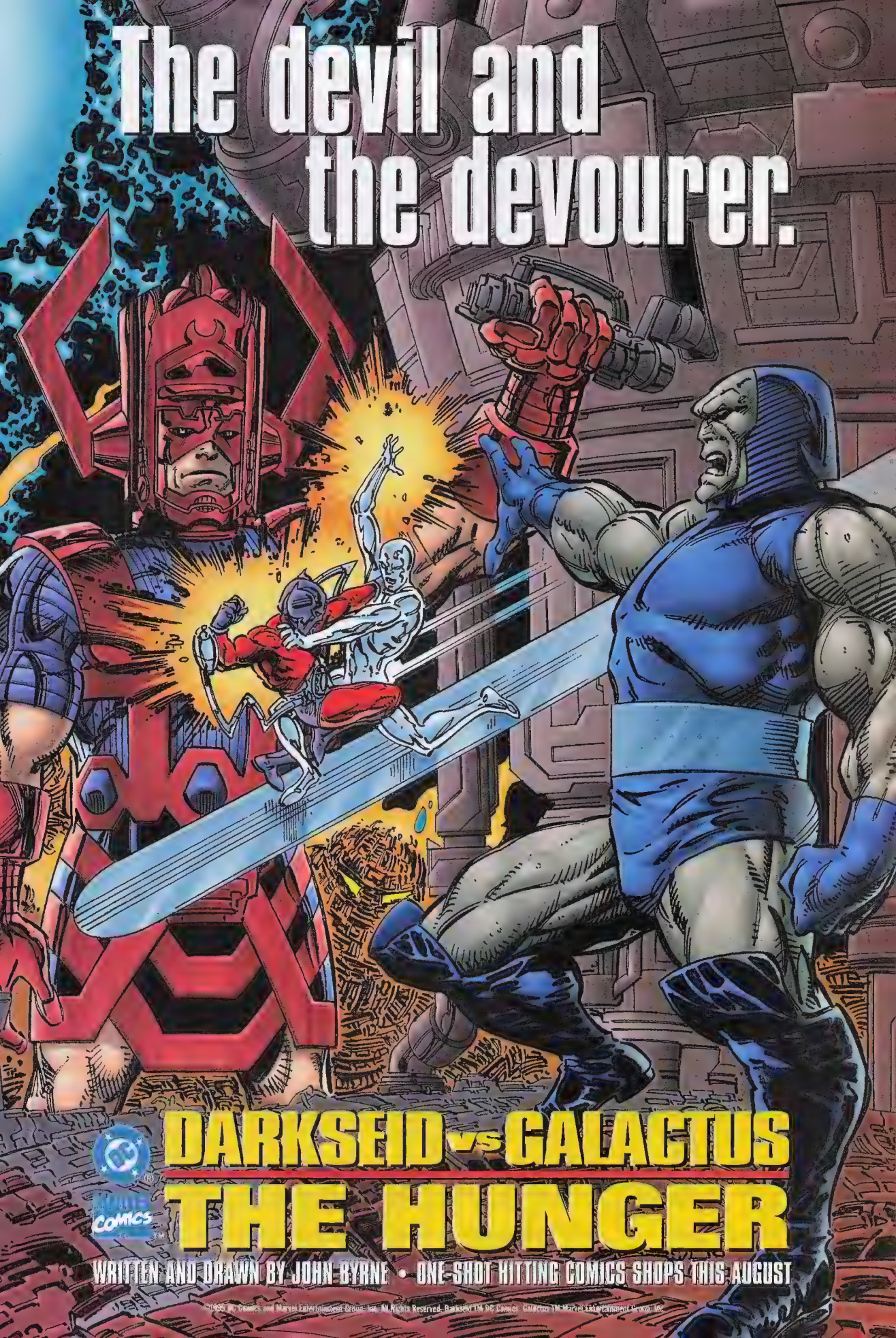
The only character that Madureira has created so far in his X-run was the mutant Blink, who debuted in the artist's *Uncanny* #317 issue, then died in the pages of *X-Men* #37, all taking place within "The Phalanx Covenant" crossover. "She came from an idea I had for a character back when I was in school," he says. "Scott told me we needed to create a character who'd just be in one issue and then die, and I said, 'I have just the character.' Actually, people kind of liked her and I still have kids ask me about her at conventions, so maybe she'll be back. In fact, I think I'll keep bothering Bob until he lets me bring her back, because I liked drawing her a lot." Blink, of course, became a major character in *Astonishing X-Men*, due to the different reality in which that title was set.

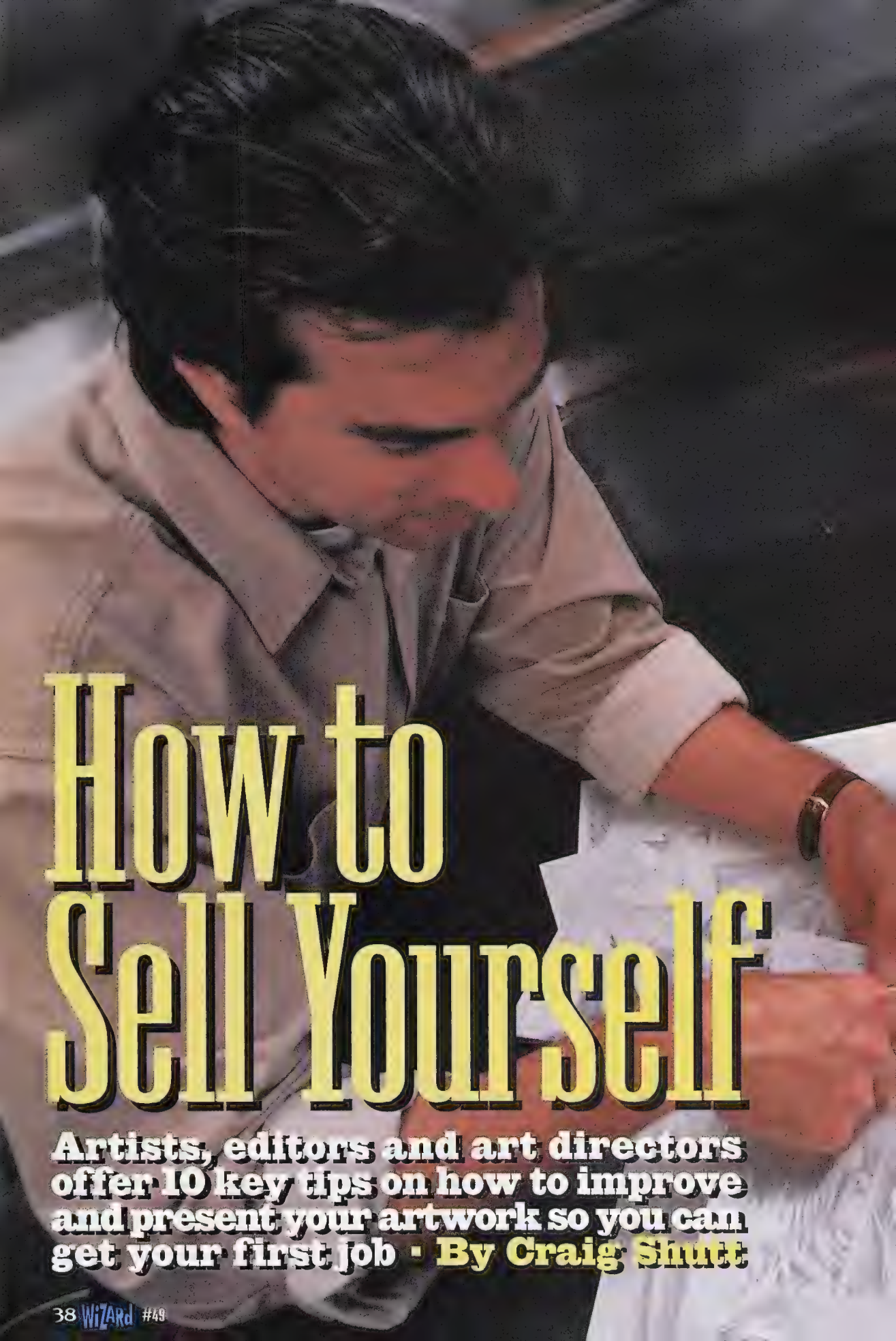
And keeping in tune with creating, like most comics artists, Madureira has thought about doing a book of his own someday. "I have these artistic mood swings, where one day I want to draw a really cool super-powered ninja or something, and the next day I'll want to do a giant robot," he says. "All I know for sure is that, if I did it right now, it would totally be a Japanese wannabe comic. But I am just so happy doing *Uncanny X-Men* that I can't even think of doing my own thing for a while."

OK, so what advice might young Joe Madureira have for all the other fanboy dreamers out there hoping to land a job like *Uncanny X-Men*? "I've been a very lucky guy," he admits, "but I also worked at it. You have to draw, draw and draw some more. And some more after that. You're never as good as you think you are. I look back now and I can't even believe how bad some of my stuff was, and I used to swear back then that it was pretty good. I hear that same attitude from a lot of kids today. When you're young and enthusiastic, a lot of the time you just don't realize that you have such a long way to go. You only get better if you keep working at it.

"I guess my advice would be to work hard and keep believing that it will happen for you. Hey, it happened to me, and I'm just an ordinary Joe." ☆

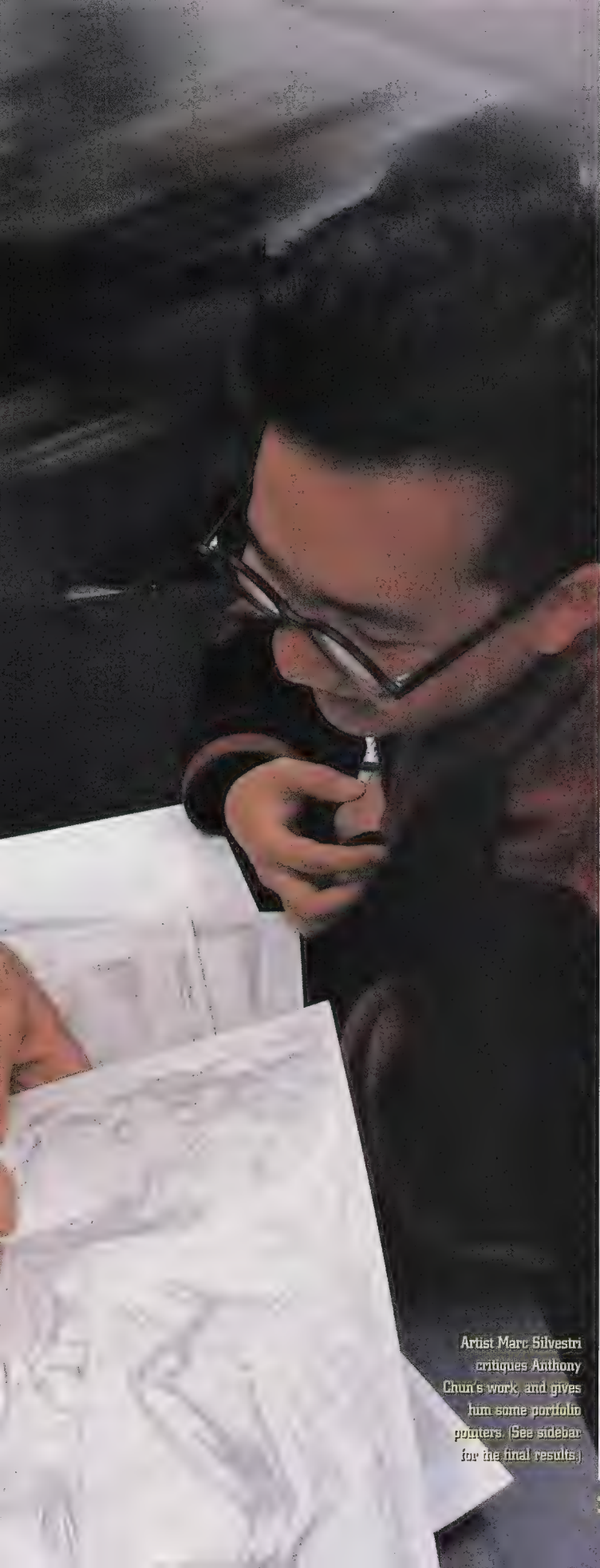
Jack Curtin, who interviewed the Batman writers in Wizard *#46, enjoys a good Ballpark frank. Hey—they plump when you cook 'em.*


The devil and the devourer.
DARKSEID vs GALACTUS
THE HUNGER
WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY JOHN BYRNE • ONE-SHOT HITTING COMICS SHOPS THIS AUGUST
COMICS



How to Sell Yourself

Artists, editors and art directors offer 10 key tips on how to improve and present your artwork so you can get your first job · By Craig Shutt



Artist Marc Silvestri critiques Anthony Chun's work, and gives him some portfolio pointers. (See sidebar for the final results.)

Jerry Ordway well remembers his first lesson in the right way to present an art portfolio—and the wrong way.

A young Wisconsin kid in the late 1970s, Ordway traveled to DC Comics' New York City offices to show his work to its former art director, Vince Colletta. Ordway was full of confidence—until he took out his samples. He'd inked them to display his finishing style, but he hadn't made copies of the pencils first, and he didn't have any additional samples of penciled pages.

"He gave me a pretty hard time," Ordway says of Colletta. "He said, 'What are you trying to be, an inker? Go home and do pencil samples!' I thought he could see that my penciling was good by the way I'd inked them. My inks were slick enough, probably slicker than what I was penciling then. I still think about that meeting."

Obviously, Ordway didn't let it discourage him, as he's drawn everything from *Superman* to *Fantastic Four*. And now he's glad to help novice artists avoid the mistakes he made. So were a number of other artists, editors and art directors who wished to share their knowledge on how to present a portfolio to prospective employers. Here are their tips:

1. Grab Some Face Time

"It's fairly necessary these days to go to a [comic book] convention," says artist Alex Ross (*Marvels*). "When you mail stuff in, they often don't respond, or they send a form letter. There's more direct interaction and feedback at a convention review."

Ordway agrees. "The best approach is to make contact at a convention and then follow up in the mail," he says. "That helps them put a face with the name on the envelope." When artists show potential, editors often will work with them, Ordway adds, asking for more samples or giving them test plots. "It becomes a grooming process."

The most important thing to take to the review, pros agree, is plenty of photocopies of each page, so you can give samples to several editors. Plus, each page—each and every page—should be clearly marked with your name, address and phone number.

2. Do Comics

You must show panel-to-panel continuity, or reviewers won't take you seriously. "They say they want to do comics work," explains artist Dan Jurgens (*Superman*, *Solar*). "But all they show me is superheroes in tough-guy poses." Adds John Romita Sr., Marvel's art director, "We call those guys shot-makers. They like to dazzle us with beauty and technique."

Chaos! Comics Publisher Brian Pulido is even more emphatic. "Pin-ups don't cut it. Comic book companies employ storytellers. I want to see anatomy, anatomy working in an environment [for weight distribution, etc.], perspective and locations."

Clear storytelling is extremely critical. "Show your pages to your friends," suggests artist Greg Capullo (*Spawn*). "If they can follow what's happening without [word] balloons, you've done your job. If they can't, don't argue with them. Go back to work."

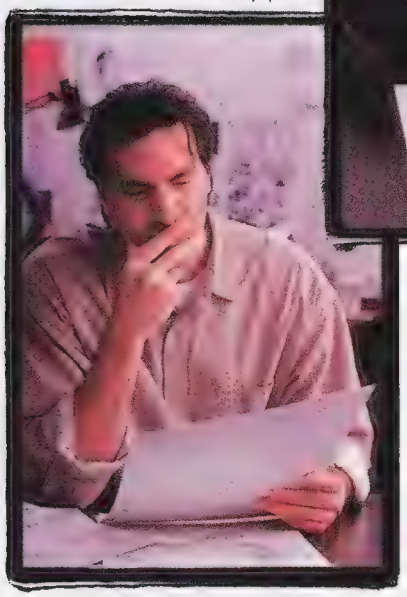
Draw more than slugfests, too, stresses Jamie S. Rich,

Photos by Craig Molenhouse

submissions editor at Dark Horse Comics. "I see a lot of fight scenes with no backgrounds or normal people," he says. "It doesn't give me an accurate sense of how well the artist draws. Versatility is important."

Dark Horse will send a sample script in return for a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) with enough postage for three ounces of material. Other editors also have sample scripts available to test pencilers, and some writers will provide scripts if asked nicely.

Tony Bedard, executive editor at Acclaim Comics, suggests this scenario to cover a range of situations: A civilian walks out of a city park and across a busy street to an apartment building; he goes up in the elevator and enters his living room; and a superhero or supervillain breaks through the wall.



"The most telltale sign of whether artists are ready to do comics is how well they handle drapery and cloth," Bedard says. "They also have to be able to show realistic interiors of living spaces, not just boxes."

Adds Pulido, "What I find incredibly lacking in today's artists is a range of human emotions. That's part and parcel of presenting a finished portfolio. Usually it's a bunch of clenched jaws that look like the guy's constipated."

Pros also suggest using existing characters, but it doesn't matter which ones. Drawing someone familiar to editors will show how well you capture the character's facial structure, build, costume and other identifying elements.

3. Don't Focus on the Presentation

The pros don't care whether the novice carries a leather portfolio or a manila folder. But Pulido makes a key point: "If you want to be a professional, use professional tools, including [high-quality] pencils, pens, and paper." Don't, he adds, under any circumstances, use the 8 1/2-by-11-inch bond paper that you'd find in a photocopier. Instead, use what most pros do: two- or three-ply bristol board, which are thicker stocks of paper. The paper size most pros use is 11-by-17 inches.

Reviewers also aren't impressed by volume. "Having a lot of samples," says Jurgens, "means you're spending too much time doing a lot of stuff, rather than spending a lot of time doing a few that are really good."

Most agreed that six samples would suffice. "That's going to take quite a while to critique panel by panel," Ordway points out.

Top Cow Productions' guidelines suggest, "Put your best piece of work at the front of your portfolio. You want to start off with a bang. If the first piece is not great, the reviewer will have formed an opinion before ever getting to the good stuff." The company also suggests putting the second-best piece at the back. "Sometimes, the last page in a portfolio stays open the longest during a review. Make this a strong piece."

4. Take Your Time

"Editors don't want to hear you can do five pages a day until you can do two good pages a day," says Ordway. "You want to make that first impression as strong as possible."

Jim Shooter, editor-in-chief at the new Broadway Comics, agrees. "Volume impresses no one. Quality is everything. Make sure what you show is your absolute best, or don't bother."

5. Don't Waste Their Time

Submissions editors and convention reviewers are extremely busy, and they don't like critiquing artists who are running on empty. "I see too many 10-page portfolios where the first two pages are fully penciled, then it gets skimpier and skimpier with more unfinished panels, and it ends up with stick figures," says Jurgens. "If you don't have fully finished pages, don't waste my time."

Top Cow's guidelines, too, warn, "Don't show half-finished work. Sketch pages are not portfolio material. If there is a particular piece you like, finish it."

6. Know the Basics

Too many artists learn their art skills from comics, resulting in bad anatomy and influences far from the original source. "Artists need a solid foundation in life drawing," says Capullo. "If they draw 100 percent from comics, they aren't going to learn everything."

Romita agrees. "Artists gravitate toward the flashy stuff that has lots of faults. They need to educate their eye and mind before they get deeply into a style. Look at how Jim Lee solves certain problems in storytelling, don't just look at how he draws rib cages and triceps. Kids love to render triceps, and everything else falls apart."

Pulido says he's saddened to see so many young artists following existing trends. "Today's trends won't be dominating in two years," he points out. "I see a lot of clones of the big names, and that means new artists are losing their original artistic voice in an attempt to get work. It's crucially important to pursue your own artistic destiny and bring your specific voice to comics."

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7. Pencil or Ink?

Some pros think being versatile and providing both pencils and inks aids in finding work. "The artists who are the most well-rounded tend to do the best in the business," says Bedard. "But when you're first starting out, it can pay to specialize."

Adds Romita, "I want to see a new artist concentrate on one skill, but [artists] Joe Kubert and Neal Adams disagree with me about that. They like to see technique as well as storytelling. But I think trying to be a complete artist at a young age is more difficult than ever today. You can always develop the other talent as you mature, and either can be a lifetime career."

Rich agrees. "If you're penciling and inking, you're probably doing a disservice to both." Dark Horse offers pencil samples to potential inkers if they send a large manila SASE with three-ounce postage. Some artists also sell sketches or pencil samples cheaply at conventions; novices can ink these pieces.

As Ordway learned, never ever show inking samples without having a copy of the original pencils available. Bedard suggests offering finishes over both rough and tight pencils, to indicate how the inking affected each. Rich suggests new artists trade penciled work to ink. "They can learn from each other and fix each other's mistakes," he explains. "It makes them think a little harder."

Pros stress that inking involves a totally different discipline than penciling. Says Pulido, "What inkers bring to the comics page that pencilers often don't is a sense of light source, depth and dimension." He suggests inkers study set-lighting manuals for the stage and how lighting changes the emotional content of a scene.

8. Listen, Don't Talk

"When you present your portfolio," Pulido warns, "do not speak. Listen. Don't argue or defend your work or offer excuses for what's there. Excuses don't matter in the real world. Only the work matters."

Ordway adds, "You have to really be confident to walk away from a critique and not be demoralized. But artists who submit samples have to be able to accept criticism."

Many artists have convinced themselves they're ready when they're not, Romita says. "Some of them come in wanting their first assignment," he laughs. "A few want to know when they can pick up their first check."

Capullo admits the critiques he originally fielded were tough. "In the beginning, I stunk," he recalls. "But I thought I was great. I was better than my friends, and my family said I was great."

The pros also admit that taking a reviewing artist's suggestions is no guarantee of success. "Artists' critiques are useful, but only editors can give you work," points out Capullo. He suggests targeting a particular editor and following his suggestions, whatever they may be. Then keep submitting work so he can gauge your progress.

Romita sympathizes. "It must be maddening for young guys starting out to have four different companies give four different signals," he says. "There are no guarantees. You have to find a sympathetic editor on the same wavelength."

9. Pray for a Recovery

With the market consolidating and sales dropping dramatically, new artists aren't a hot commodity today. "There are a lot of artists out of jobs who are looking for more work," says Ordway. "This summer is going to be interesting."

Adds Jurgens, "You're going to have to be more talented to get in now than you had to be two years ago. Back then, this industry was sucking up any kid who could hold a pencil between his toes. It took a lot of people who weren't ready. Now things are more competitive."

10. Keep At It

Persistence can pay off, everyone agrees. "Most of us had to work real hard to get in," Pulido notes. "If you want it bad enough, it will come."

Ordway agrees. "Comics is a young field," he says. "It likes new blood to invigorate it. If you're good, if you have confidence, and if you stick to it, you'll get work. Don't hold a grudge; just keep working." And if anyone knows the value of that advice, it's the guy who walked out of DC's offices many years ago and vowed he'd be back. ☆

Craig Shutt, who reported on how to write a comic book in Wizard *#48, can't even draw a hot bath.*

SUBMISSION CONTACTS

Here're some places to send art submissions. Never send originals, only photocopies. A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be included with every mailing for any feedback to be received.

Archie Comics: Victor Gorelick, Managing Editor, 325 Fayette Ave., Mamaroneck, NY 10543.

Acclaim Comics: Don Perlin, Vice President, 275 Seventh Ave., 14th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

Dark Horse Comics: Jamie S. Rich, Submissions Editor, 10956 S.E. Main St., Milwaukie, OR 97222. (Dark Horse will send a sample script or penciled pages in return for a three-ounce SASE. Indicate which sample you want.)

DC Comics: Submissions Editor, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

Image Comics: Brent Braun, Image Comics, 2400 E. Katella Ave., Suite 1065, Anaheim, CA 92806. (Submissions are copied and forwarded to all Image studios.)

Kitchen Sink Press: Submissions Editor, 310 Riverside Dr., Northampton, MA 01060.

Malibu Comics: Larry Reynosa, Submissions Editor, 26707 Agoura Rd., Calabasas, CA 91302.

Marvel Comics: Submissions Editor, 387 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016.

BREAKING IN

Budding artist Anthony Chun knows the value of going to comic conventions. Image Comics' latest find showed his samples to DC Comics editor Brian Augustyn at the 1993 ComicFest show in Philadelphia. Impressed, Augustyn gave him a sample Green Lantern script he uses to test new artists. He liked what he got back and invited Chun up to DC "for a chat."

"That was great," Chun says. "I was really excited."

Chun went through several more rounds of samples, "so [Augustyn] could see me work out some problems in my storytelling," he says. Finally, he was assigned a two-part Black Condor story that ran in *Showcase '94* #10 and #11. But no more assignments followed. "That happens a lot, because there are so many good, reliable artists out there," Chun says. "But I was panicking."

Fortunately, the *Showcase* issues appeared just before the 1994 San Diego ComiCon, where he ran into David Wohl, an editor for Image's Top Cow Productions studio, while waiting in line at a concession stand. Chun struck up a conversation, showed Wohl the *Showcases* and his samples--which included three sets of two-page sequences displaying various scenes and storytelling techniques--and Wohl promised to call.

Later, Chun got a call from Top Cow head honcho Marc Silvestri offering to pay his expenses to move to Santa Monica and to give him an exclusive agreement. He also received an offer from another Image studio, Extreme Studios, from showing his work at the San Diego con. "But Top Cow was just starting out, and it had a lot of start-up energy," Chun says. "I liked the idea of getting in on the ground floor."

He did pin-up pages and trading cards, then penciled June's *Kill Razor* one-shot book. Now he's working on the four-part *Velocity* series with writer Kurt Busiek. "It's going to be big," he enthuses. "The script is extraordinary. In *Kill Razor*, I'm still working through a few problems, but in *Velocity*, I've got some real momentum. I'm really rolling on these pages."

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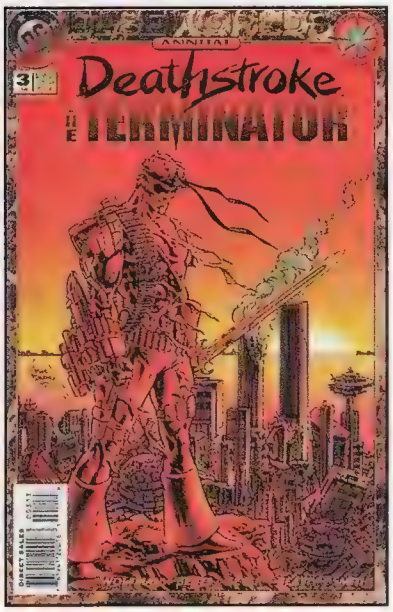
Coming to America

Rising superstars Mike Deodato Jr. and Roger Cruz are spearheading a wave of talented Brazilian artists

Once upon a time, if you lived in another country and wanted to experience the American Dream, you had to take an uncomfortable journey in a crowded steamer and stand in interminable lines at New York's Ellis Island.

Today, for many foreign comic writers and artists, all you need is an agent, a fax machine and access to Federal Express.

Recent years have seen a growing Brazilian presence in the world of comics art, fueled primarily by the clients of David Campiti's talent agency, Glass House Graphics and Art & Comics International (a two-section agency: Glass House, run by Campiti, is the American side, while Art & Comics, the Brazilian company, is run by his partner Helcio de Carvalho; see sidebar). Two of the biggest success stories to date to come out of Brazil are Mike Deodato Jr. and Roger Cruz, whose work on *Wonder Woman* and *X-Men: Alpha* and *Omega* respectively have quickly gained them an extensive fan following in the United States. This is despite the fact that neither speaks much English, and between them they've been to the United States a total of once—Deodato visited in 1993 to sign 4,000 copies of Innovation's *Beauty and the Beast* for the home-shopping network, QVC. Both hope to make it the San Diego Comic Convention this year to meet their legions of new fans.



By Paul J. Grant

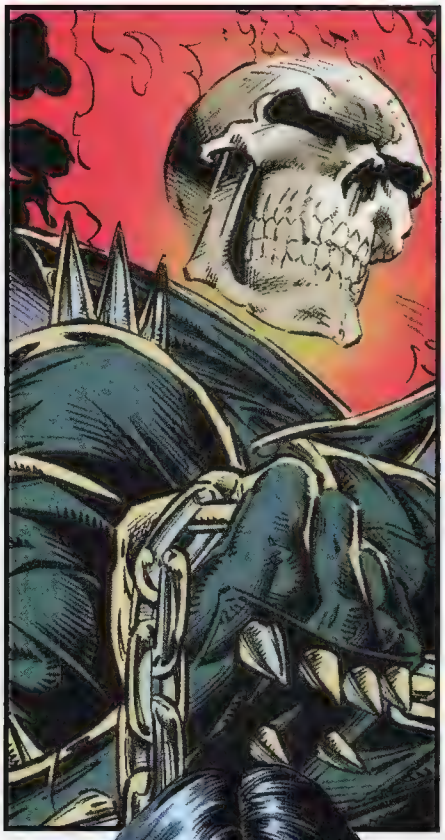
While he depicts the male figure well (see his *Deathstroke* cover, left), Mike Deodato is best known for his babes, such as Extreme's Glory (above) and DC's Wonder Woman (opposite).

Deodato

Mike Deodato Jr., whose real name is Deodato Taumaturgo Borges Filho, was born 32 years ago in Campina Grande, a small town in northern Brazil. Son of an artist, as well as a self-confessed "comics freak," Deodato became addicted to comics at an early age. "I remember enjoying American comics as much as I enjoyed my pacifier," he explains in his native Portuguese, laughing. "As a matter of fact, they were very important in my learning how to read. I can't read foreign comics in their native languages, but I do read them when they are reprinted in Brazil [translated into Portuguese]. My dad used to bring me some European comics as well, but I would put them aside. What I really loved were the colorful heroes dressed in spandex."

Although Deodato determined he wanted to be a professional artist, he never attended art school. "My teachers were my father and the countless comic books I grew up reading." His artistic influences

Deodato Jr.



Roger Cruz penciled Marvel's *Ghost Rider* (left) and *Uncanny X-Men* (below right), as well as a Youngblood poster for Extreme Studios (next page).

include Will Eisner, Berni Wrightson, Todd McFarlane, Marc Silvestri, Jim Lee, Dale Keown, Neal Adams, Dick Giordano, José Luis García López, Jorge Zaffino, Adam Kubert, Burne Hogarth and Moebius.

Deodato's first comic book work was published in Brazil back in the 1970s, and was followed by a few stories published in Europe. In 1990, his agent de Carvalho got him his first American assignments. Interestingly enough, before treading the waters of the American market, he "Americanized" his name at the suggestion of an American publisher who cited the fact that comic legends Jack Kirby and Gil Kane had changed their names from Jacob Kurtzberg and Eli Katz, respectively.

His first American assignments included inking *The Protectors* and penciling and inking *Santa Claws*, both for Malibu Comics. Innovation's *Beauty and the Beast*, based on the TV show, followed immediately, and he alternated with his father on the publisher's *Quantum Leap* for a while. After Innovation folded, he did several issues of *Hybrids* for Continuity Comics, which were never published. After that, his agents got him a tryout with DC for *Wonder Woman*, and he won the job as regular artist with issue #90 last year. Almost instantly, *WW* gained him widespread notice and a lot of job offers: *Avengers* at Marvel Comics, *Glory* at Image Comics, *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* for Valiant and an upcoming painted story for Dark Horse's *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor*.

Deodato has built much of his reputation on drawing sexy women, but that was never his plan. "To be honest, it was always easier for me to do men than women. The first superbabe I ever did was *Samuree* [for Continuity, again never published], and you know what? I liked it! Then came *Wonder Woman*, and I liked it even better. At that point, I said to myself, "If I'm to draw a book with so many girls, I've gotta make 'em so gorgeous that fans will [drool] just looking at them." Some people told me that goal was accomplished..."

While he feels he may be in danger of getting stereotyped as a Good Girl Artist, he believes those who have seen his work know how versatile he can be in styles, genres and techniques. That versatility will be called upon for his next big gig, the reconstruction of Marvel's *Thor*, with writer Warren Ellis. "When [*Thor* editor] Ralph Macchio told me to completely revamp the God of Thunder—as he'll become a real dark and moody character—I said, 'This is a dream come true!'"

And Deodato's one of the most prolific artists in the biz, currently handling three monthly titles (*Avengers*, *Thor* and *Glory*). He accounts for his speed by claiming to need only four hours of sleep a night.

How does he cope with his newfound success? "I try not to think so much about it. Of course, I love getting positive feedback from fans and editors, but ego trips scare me because they make you stop learning and deceive yourself with the false idea that you've got it made—and that's where you hit a dead end."

While he knows little about the United States, he has an idealized view of the land of opportunity. He sees the United States as "a fair country where people from all over the world will get ahead if they're honest, truthful and dedicated to what they do. And hey—America makes the best hamburgers I've ever tried!"

DEATHSTROKE and WONDER WOMAN ™ & © DC Comics. GLORY ™ & © Rob Liefeld. GHOST RIDER and X-MEN ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group.
Photos courtesy Glass House Graphics.

YOUNGBLOOD ™ & © Rob Liefeld

Cruz

Rogerio Cruz, born 24 years ago in Brazil's largest city, Sao Paolo, grew up reading American comics like *Hot Stuff* and *Richie Rich* in Portuguese, but as he got older switched to superheroes. After high school he considered attending art school to make a living as an artist, but chose to learn by himself. He was influenced by artists John Buscema, John Byrne and Frank Miller, and more recently by Image artists Jim Lee and Marc Silvestri.

While he shortened his first name to Roger in 1993, he started in comics as a letterer in 1987, then wrote and illustrated underground and adult stories for Brazilian publishers.

After hooking up with the Art & Comics International agency, his first American comics work was inking *Mack Bolan: The Executioner* for Innovation in 1993. A back-up story in *Ghost Rider* #50 led to assignments on *Incredible Hulk* (#419) and *The Uncanny X-Men* (#315), and finally the prestige, high-profile *X-Men: Alpha* and *Omega* bookends for this year's "Age of Apocalypse" mega-crossover.

Moving from Marvel to Image, Cruz did a fill-in on *Brigade*. Future work will include issues of Marvel's *Generation X* and Image's *Team Youngblood*, and he's scheduled to take over as regular artist on Image's oldest title, *Youngblood*.

Although he's probably best known for his work on team books, Cruz hopes someday to draw solo characters like Batman, Lobo, Daredevil, Spawn and his all-time favorite character—The Silver Surfer. "If I'm a success," he muses, "to a certain extent it makes up for all the weekends I spend working, and nights with little or no sleep, to achieve the level of quality I want my pages to always have."

And it's that level of quality that American audiences are clamoring for. But, ironically, Cruz admits to know very little about what makes America tick.

"What I know about the American Dream is what I get to read in newspapers and magazines," he says. "Maybe in my first trip to the States, I will be able to see America with my own eyes and have an opinion."

As for the rising popularity of Brazilian artists, Cruz sums it up best: "Does it make any difference at all where an artist comes from? What fans and publishers really care about is the quality of the artwork they're getting. Not the creator's nationality." ☆

Paul J. Grant, who interviews Denny O'Neil on page 68 of this issue, blames it on Rio.

AGENT OF CHANGE

Former Innovation publisher David Campiti became an agent almost by reverse, since he started out as a client. "We began dealing with Helcio de Carvalho at Art & Comics International, for them to handle reprints of some of Innovation's work. I offhandedly mentioned one day that we were desperately trying to find good, dependable artists who could work for Innovation's budget, primarily painters. Helcio said, 'We have hundreds of artists down here!'"

The first Brazilian artist hired by Innovation was O. J. Cariello (now pencilling DC's *Deathstroke*) for *Queen of the Damned* #3 in 1993, who worked on the rest of the 12-issue series.

Campiti was delighted with the results. Slowly but surely, he turned more and more Innovation books over to the Brazilians to be illustrated—*Quantum Leap*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Interview with the Vampire*, et al. Eventually, almost every Innovation title was illustrated by Brazilians.

In early 1993, when Campiti was planning on leaving Innovation, de Carvalho was in the States and proposed that Campiti become his American partner, set up an office in the States, and officially represent him to all publishers. "We put together a contract fairly quickly, and produced contracts for his artists to sign that tied me into it all, and started work," Campiti, who founded Glass House Graphics, recalls. "Our first job together was actually for Now Comics, then we got one job at DC, one job at Marvel, and it snowballed from there to where we're now doing about 22 titles a month."

Glass House Graphics/Art & Comics' client list has also snowballed. It includes such artists as Mike Deodato Jr. (Marvel Comics' *Avengers* and Image Comics' *Glory*), Roger Cruz (Marvel's *X-Men Alpha* and *Omega*, Image's *Youngblood*), Marc Campos (DC's *Extreme Justice* and *Guy Gardner*), Heinrich Kipper (Dark Horse Comics' *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor*), Cesar Lobo (DC's *Judge Dredd*) and Luke Ross (DC's *New Gods*), among others.

Campiti admits to having two reservations when he started working with the Brazilian artists: "One, that we would lose a lot in the translation, and two, that there would be a tremendous difficulty in shipping. Neither has proven to be that big a difficulty. We very rarely have a problem with translations, because Helcio speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese, so we've got the translation problem covered.

"Federal Express has also instituted an overnight shipping policy out of Sao Paolo, so in a real emergency we can get things to editors overnight, just as if we were using American artists."

Campiti is currently shopping around a creator-owned series for both Deodato and Cruz, which they co-created with the agent.

Who does Campiti predict as most likely to follow Deodato and Cruz's path to success? "Luke Ross, I think, is going to be our next big star. He's extremely flexible and can do any style we can throw at him. He's a terrific chameleon."

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Wizards OF THE COAST

Wizard casts the WildC.A.T.s movie!

Casting Call 7

OK, so what if the *WildC.A.T.s* cartoon was canceled? (And how lame was that theme song?) We could revive the franchise by dreaming up a live-action movie with the best that Hollywood has to offer, and presto!—we're talking blockbuster. Sound easy? Well, it's not, but who cares? It's our movie, and we'll do whatever the hell we want to. So who would star in our star-studded feature? Onward...

SPARTAN

• "Ah'm going to break yoo." Dolph Lundgren (*The Punisher, Rocky IV*) has the build to make the android leader of the 'C.A.T.s a force to be reckoned with.

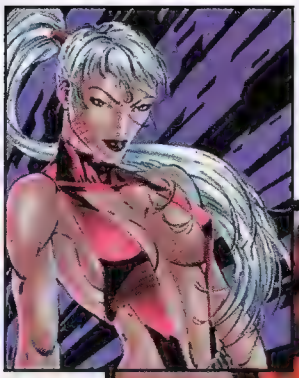
GRIFTER

The masked gunman of the 'C.A.T.s would be played by Brad Pitt (*Interview with the Vampire, Legends of the Fall*), who'd add big-name star quality, and more, to this flick. The ladies'll be droolin' down the theater aisles.

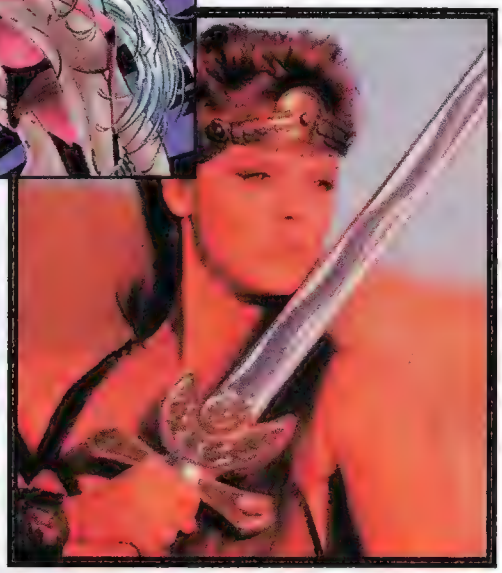
By a bunch of *Wizard* staffers

WILDC.A.T.S and all characters and artwork shown ™ & © Aegis Entertainment Inc. DBA WildStorm Productions
All photos: Everett Collection, unless otherwise noted.

VOODOO
The lovely lady of the team would be played perfectly by actress/songstress Vanessa Williams, who was last seen on Broadway in *Kiss of the Spider Woman.*

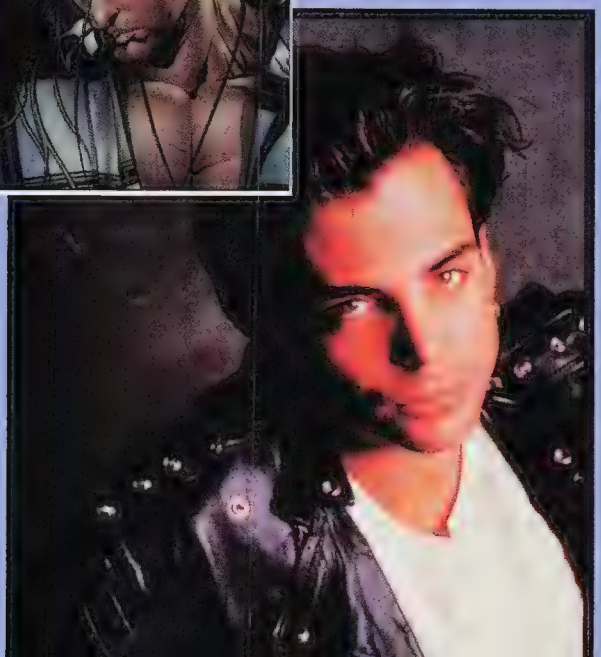


ZEALOT
Brigitte Nielsen (*Red Sonja, Rocky IV*) would play this woman warrior to the hilt. She's built like a friggin' tank!



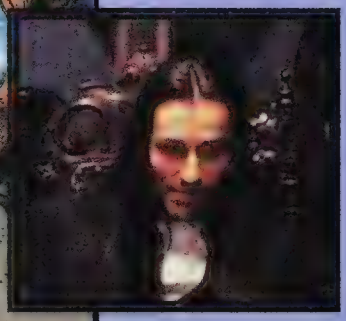
WARBLADE
Marker's Richard Grieco is a great choice for this hack-and-slasher. Just dye his hair green and we're all set.

MAUL
In his human form, Stephen Baldwin (*Crossing the Bridge, Threesome*) would be pretty cool as Maul. We figured animatronics and some special effects dabbling by ILM would be good for his "big guy" form.

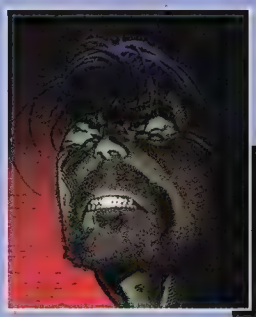


And the villains...?

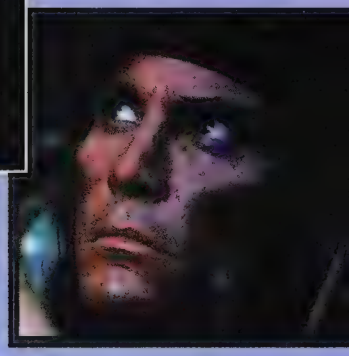
LORD EMP
Y'know, it's tough casting a midget these days. So we won't. We'll just match a cool face with Lord Emp: that of Richard Jaeckel (*The Dirty Dozen, Delta Force 2*). Those ILM guys'll have to think of the rest.

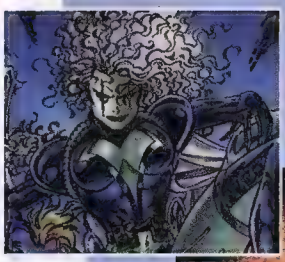


MILSPONT
Like Maul, this guy would be mostly animatronics and effects, but with the cool, grainy voice of Michael Wincott (*The Crow, Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*).

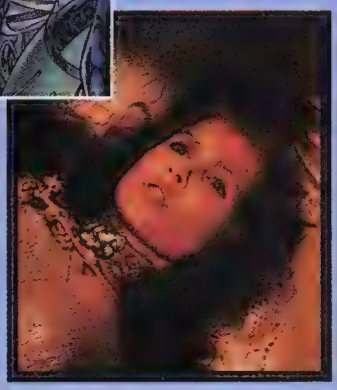


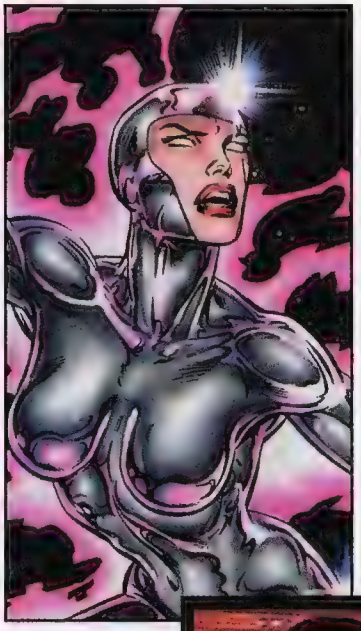
HIGHTOWER
A big, mean dude is needed here, and Sonny Landham (*Predator, 48 Hours*) is up to the challenge.





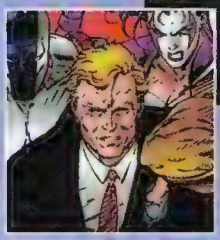
TAPESTRY
She's sleek, regal and sexy, and only Sadie Frost (*Bram Stoker's Dracula*) could play her.





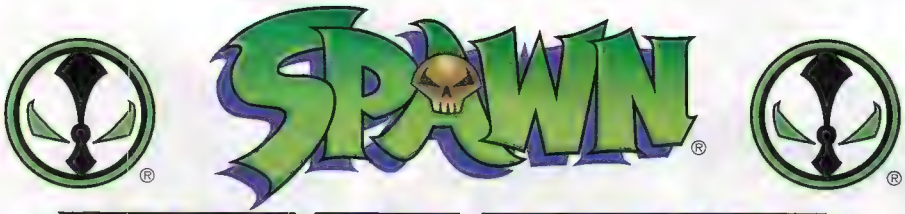
VOID
Victoria's Secret catalog model Stephanie Seymore would look awesome as the silvery Russian teleporter. She has the pouty-yet-sultry lips an' everything.

DAN QUAYLE
No evil villain team is ever complete without Dan Quayle. And better yet, portraying Dan Quayle...is Dan Quayle. It doesn't get any better than this, Republicans!



So that wraps this all up. If Hollywood can get its act together enough to put out a WildC.A.T.s cartoon (and really, REALLY bad movies like *Captain America* and *Tank Girl*), surely it can put its ass in gear to get this movie up and running.
Or maybe it's too busy churning out crap like *Fluke* and *Congo*. ☆

The Wizard staff might not know its ass from a hole in the wall, but it knows an evil Republican when it sees one.



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KRASH COURSE

WOMEN AREN'T MEN IN DRAG!

Welcome back, people. Before you go running off to ask your folks what the title of this month's article means, I'll just tell you. "Drag" is a term used when a guy dresses up like a woman. (Between last month's title and this month's, your parents are going to be severely misled as to what I'm actually teaching you!) Unfortunately, most aspiring comic studs draw their women like men in drag!

My own mother would tell me the women I drew sucked! As a young pup, I would draw naked ladies on occasion and show 'em to my friends. I recall this one drawing I was particularly proud of. My best dirty drawing yet! She had it all. Long hair, tons of eyelashes with eyeliner, dark lipstick and huge...you know. So I showed it to some college kid who lived next door at the time. I held it up proudly to him, anxiously awaiting his drool to splash on the ground! He said, "Her shoulders are wider than mine!!!" That was it?! That's your comment?! No "Whoa, mama!"?!? I just didn't get what was wrong with my women. I had all the ingredients.

Here's what happens. You want to draw comics, right? So you draw tons of muscle guys, 'cause that's your main attraction for drawing comics. In a way, it's all you even see, because you're so zoned in. So what ends up happening is you get pretty good at drawing muscle guys and little else. Then when you do go to draw your prototypical superhero woman, you take what you know about women (all their differences) and try to make them work on a male frame, 'cause that's what you know!

1. beauty begins at the bone

They say beauty is only skin deep—not true. Drawing-wise, beauty begins at the bone. And women begin to differ from men starting there. A female skull has a much less developed jaw than a male, and this, of course, affects her appearance. In this drawing of a female's head (above left), I've divided it in half to show you what I mean.

First, cover the right side of the picture. Initially, you may think, "Not bad." Now cover the left and notice the improvement. The left side was off 'cause it contains a male skull. To save space, I've included a couple of feature fine prints, also. Notice on the right side of the face: the thinner eyebrow; an upswept, almond shaped eye; and the nose is placed slightly lower and is slightly more up-turned.

In the profile (above right), notice how the bridge of the nose is drawn with a concave line and is slightly upturned. The eye and corner of the mouth both sweep upward, and again, the jaw is less developed. These tips should really help you to draw a prettier face.

KRASH COURSE and all related text, artwork and characters ™ & © Greg Capullo.

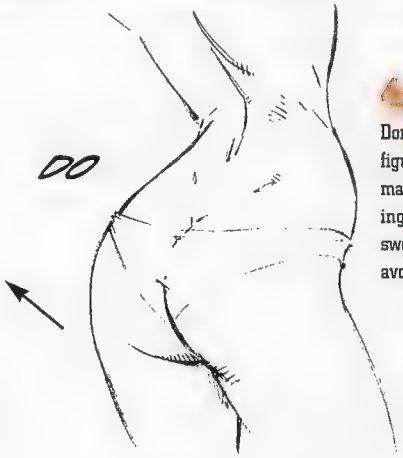
2. a woman is not a man

Now let's blast through some differences between the male and female figure! Of course, the most noticeable is the shape of a woman's breasts and the lack of steroid-popping muscles. But it goes farther than that. Without getting technical, we'll run down these differences from top to bottom. 1) Women appear to have longer, more slender necks. The length of the neck is an illusion caused by smaller trapezious muscles. 2) The clavicle bones are evident at the point of the shoulder. 3) A woman's shoulder-to-shoulder length should span about 2 and 1/2 heads wide. 4) A woman's nipples are lower than a man's. 5) The waist is as wide as her head. 6) The navel is placed below the waistline (a male's is even with or slightly above it). 7) A gap is present between the legs at the crotch. 8) The crotch is slightly raised. (In reality, a woman's crotch is further down than in men. However, raising the crotch will give the appearance of long legs.) 9) The pelvis is wider. 10) Heels are added to add length to the leg and height, to equal male proportions.

Boom! That's it! You're on your way to drawing more babeliciously already. A word of advice on the use of line. When you draw males, it's best to use blocky structure with slightly angular lines. It's the opposite with women! They require softer, rounded forms and curved, sweeping lines. This will help you get a soft, graceful look! As far as the amount of detail lines used, "Less is more." Keep it simple!

3. is bigger better?

Now for some common dos & don'ts. First off, don't draw the breasts too large. Super-size breasts will ruin your figure's symmetry and cause her to look clumsy. Do draw adequate-sized breasts and place them high enough to suggest firmness. This will give the character a more athletic look.

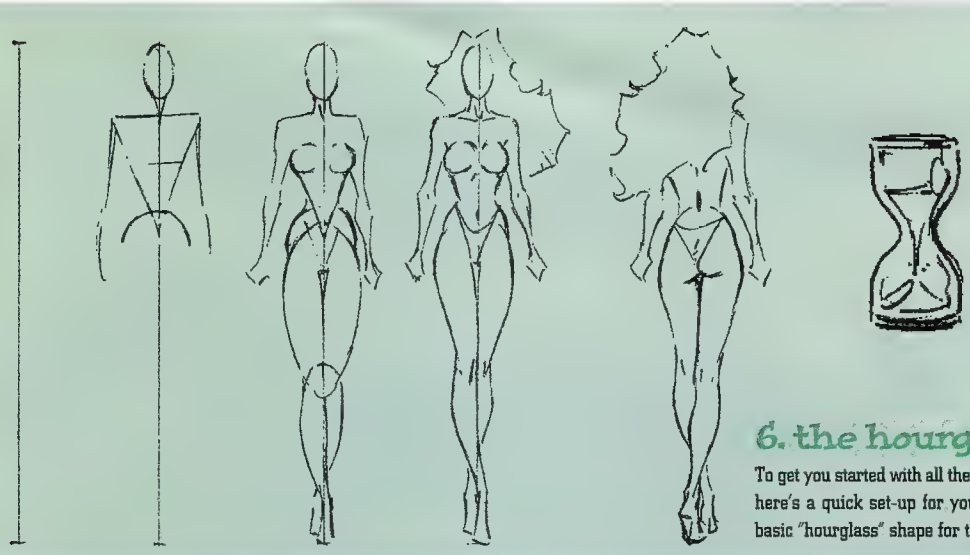


4. a rounder butt

Don't draw butts too big. Again, you want your figure to appear agile. Also, be careful not to make the butt sag. Do draw a round butt, making sure that the crease under the cheeks sweeps upward instead of downward. This will avoid the sagging posterior look!

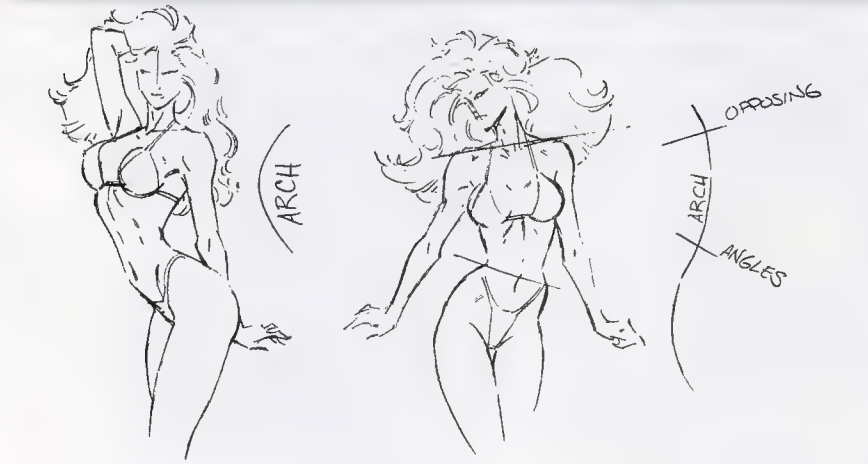
5. give her a hand

Don't draw a woman's hands as you would a man's. Avoid large knuckles and bones. Draw the hands much more slender and with a lot less lines. Draw subtle suggestions for the knuckles, or they'll look like a witch's hands! Women's hands are more slender, smaller in size and a lot less muscular than men's.



6. the hourglass

To get you started with all the stuff you've just learned, here's a quick set-up for you to practice. Notice the basic "hourglass" shape for the female figure.



7. sex appeal

Now, I'll teach you how to give your babes grace and sex appeal. It's the easiest formula in the world, and soon you will have it! Ready?

Number one rule is arch the back! Even at times when it doesn't seem to make sense, as in the example of the figure drawn bending forward. Men can look kinda cool sometimes slumping forward, but women end up looking dumpy when they're drawn that way. A sweeping arch will add grace and fluidity, and will echo the other sweeping lines used on other areas of the figure.

Number two rule is oppose the angles of the shoulders with the hips. In other words, if her left shoulder is down, draw her left hip up, and vice versa.

Number three rule is if you don't draw heels on your figure, keep her toes pointed whenever possible. This will add length and grace to the legs. (Also, make the feet small. Your women look clumsy if drawn with big flappers.)

There it is! This should get you started drawing the sexiest, most mouth-watering, bodacious superbabes yet! By the way, my mother now tells me my women are beautiful. Till next month...keep the lead burnin', tough guys! ☆

Greg Capullo can be seen every month doing his fair share of the art on Spawn, *published by Image Comics.*

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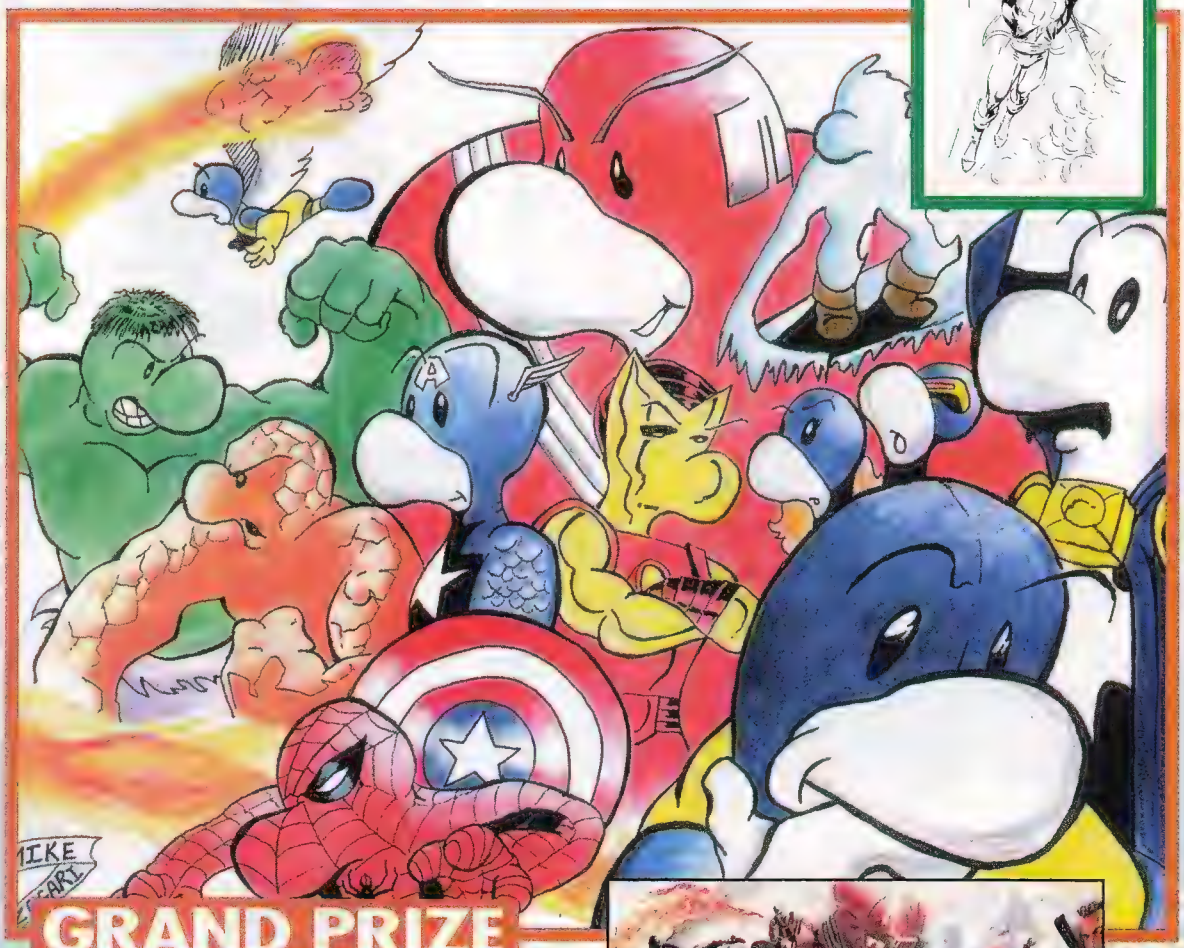
the Drawing board

The 10 folks whose artwork got an honorable mention this month will each receive the Gold Edition of *Shadowman #0* signed by Bob Hall and Tom Ryder, and a *Turok #26* signed by Tim Truman. The four cool runners-up will each receive the original *Batman Adventures: Mad Love* special signed by Paul Dini, Bruce Timm and Arleen Sorkin (Harley Quinn on *Batman: The Animated Series*), and a *Rai* Trade Paperback signed by Sean Chen. The highly talented artist of the winning entry this month will receive all that stuff, plus a *Zero Hour* TPB and an original piece of Captain Marvel art by Jerry Ordway, both signed by him (thanks a lot, guy)! Congrats to everybody!

The showcase of comic book fan art.



BONE™ & © Jeff Smith. All Marvel characters™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group.

GRAND PRIZE

BONE-VELS (a parody of *Wizard* #42's cover)
By Michael Zagari
Valley Stream, NY

AVENGERS & ULTRON ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

RUNNER-UP

AVENGERS vs. ULTRON
By A. Diller
Colorado Springs, CO

White Ranger ™ & © Saban Ent.

RUNNER-UP

WHITE RANGER
by Greg Rothschadl
Moorhead, MN

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RUNNER-UP

SPAWN QUEEN
by Tim Tobias
San Diego, CA

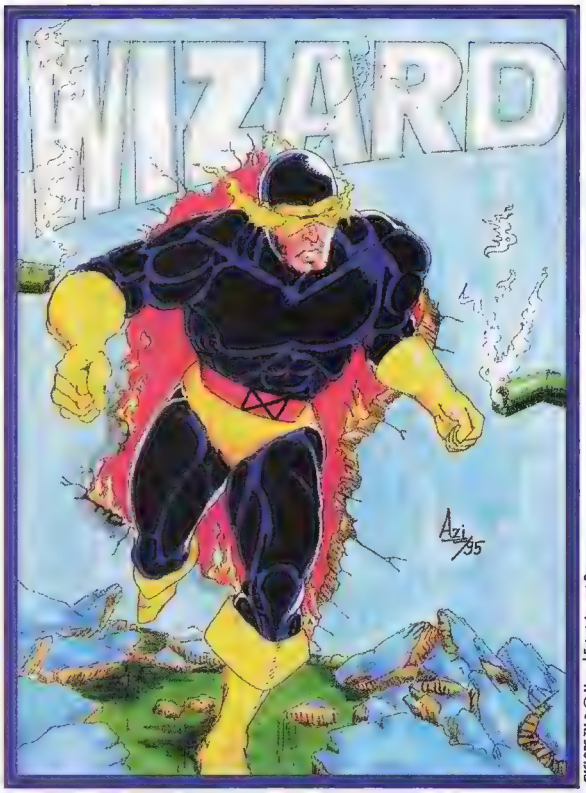
Vampirella ™ & © Harris Publications Inc. Betty Boop ™ & © King Features Syndicate Inc./Fleischer Studios Inc.

RUNNER-UP

BOOPIRELLA
by Arthur E. Doeppe
Mech, VA

BATGIRL
by Jason West
Hicksville, NY

BATGIRL ™ & © DC Comics



CYCLOPS ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

CYCLOPS
by Ruli Ibrahim Azi
West Java, Indonesia

VINDICATORS
by Josh Jensen
Prattville, AL

VINDICATORS ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

GRIFTER ™ & © Aegis Entertainment Inc.

GRIFTER
by Henry Yung
Flushing, NY

OMEGA RED
by Gregory Semkow
Richmond Hill, NY

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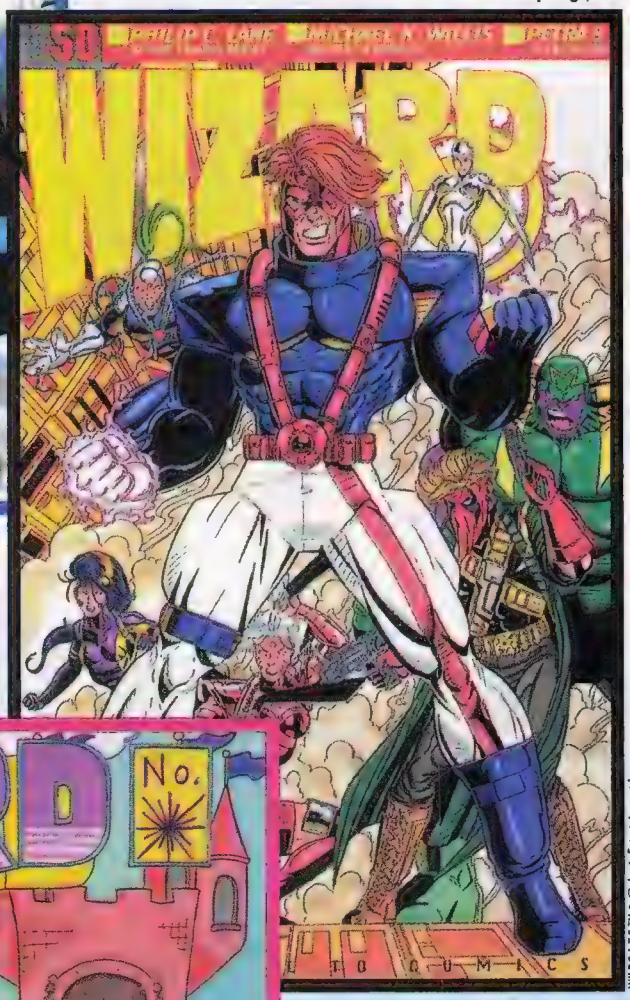
WILDC.A.T.S
by Philip C. Lane
Colorado Springs, CO



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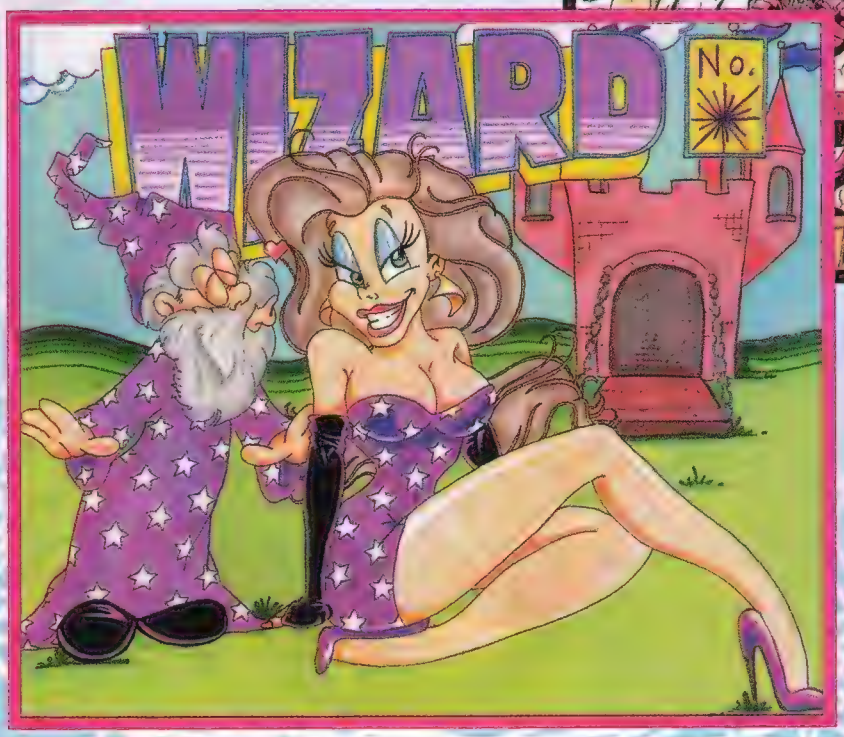
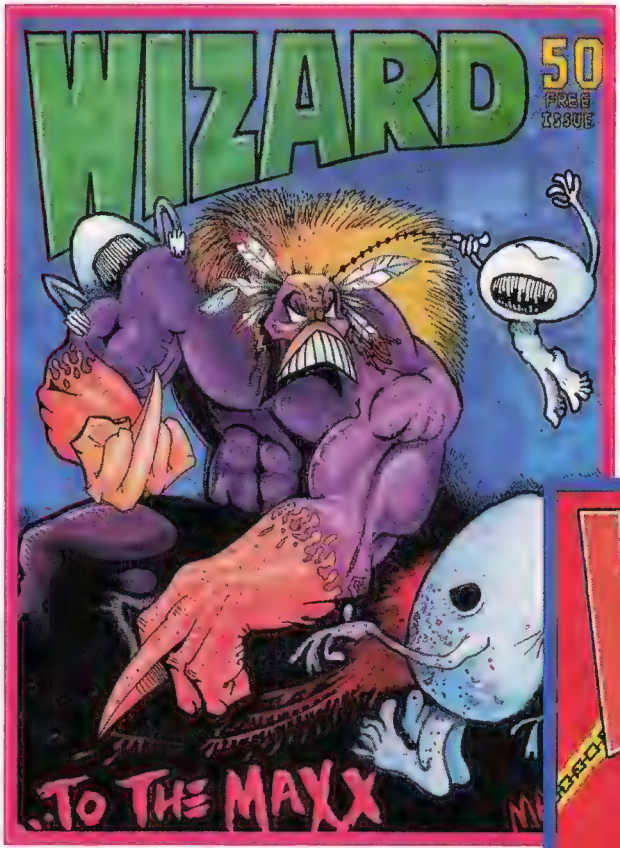


POOF & CRYSTAL
by Vicki Cusimano
Lafayette, LA



THE MAXX
by David B. Malin
Lebanon, PA

THE MAXX ™ & © Sam Kieth

GHOST RIDER
by John Duckett
Bowie, MD

GHOST RIDER ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

THE PUNISHER
by Loo Mun Sun
West Malaysia

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Entries for The Drawing Board should be sent to:
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c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Avenue
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Submissions can be on any form of unlined paper or posterboard, and can be in any medium (oils, crayon, line art, etc.). Neon inks will not print. Artwork must not be larger than 8" x 11-1/4". Do not fold, bend, or roll artwork. Mail flat to avoid damage. Please enclose your name and full address. All entries are nonreturnable and become property of Wizard Press. Employees of Wizard Press are the sole judges of the contests, and all decisions are final. Good luck!

CUT & PRINT

The comic insider's guide to Hollywood

Hits like *StarGate* began a new era for sci-fi movies.

Sci-Fi FLiES High

Captain's Log, Summer 1995. We are the voyagers of the Starship Hollywood. Our mission: To explore strange new worlds on film and to seek out new life for some actors' careers.

In other words, to boldly go to the top of the box office charts. A highly logical fact: The trek can only be accomplished with big budgets and the films of one genre. Get ready for Sci-Fi Movies: The Next Generation. They're arriving in numbers to rival a Tribble invasion. This fall brings *Twelve Monkeys*, a sci-fi futurist outing with Brad Pitt, Bruce Willis and Madeleine Stowe set in year 2045, when a killer virus has rendered the planet uninhabitable. "It's a strange film," said Willis. "At its heart, it's a tragic love story. I do stuff in the film that I've never done before. You won't even recognize Brad Pitt." Willis is also signed for *The Fifth Element*, another sci-fi thriller.

"Sci-fi is very emotional. It's cerebral, totally bizarre. For half of *Fifth Element*, you don't know whether I'm dreaming it all up or not. It blows my mind," he said. Meanwhile, this October, Ralph Fiennes (*Schindler's List*) stars in *Strange Days*, directed by Kathryn Bigelow and produced by James Cameron.

Fiennes plays Lenny Nero, a guy who sells dreams and hustles nightmares, dealing in producing real-life experiences through a new technology that makes every sensation immediate. Said Fiennes, "When I read the script, I wasn't sure what to make of the story, but it was definitely like nothing I've ever even heard of before. That's the appeal." In the distant future, get ready for: Oliver Stone's *Planet of the Apes*, which might star Arnold Schwarzenegger; *AI* (which stands for "Artificial Intelligence"), Stanley Kubrick's first stab into the genre since *2001*; and Roger Avary's *Mr. Stitch*, with Rutger Hauer.

"Sci-fi is flying so high that we're thinking of bringing back the *Aliens* franchise. They're talking to me about it," confirmed Sigourney Weaver, whose character Ripley killed herself in *Alien*^{3}. Through the magic of Hollywood, her fingernail survived and she will be cloned. "Of course I can come back," Weaver laughed. "This is science fiction. Plus I like the idea of playing someone who killed herself and then is brought back against her will."

StarGate hauled in an unexpected $77 million at the box office in 1994. "Combine that with the success of TV's *The X-Files* and all the *Star Trek* spinoffs, and it's like movie makers have woken up to a new market to tap," said Christopher Borde, a motion picture analyst for Paul Kagen and Associates (a media research firm), who added, "It's a new era. People live on the Internet and flock to virtual reality places. Movies are just reflecting the technology. And filmmakers have new, exciting possibilities for blow-your-mind special effects."

Of course, every sci-fi fan is waiting for the real end of the universe, which is when George Lucas releases a *Star Wars* prequel in 1997 or '98. Next year, Lucas will release an enhanced version of the original *Star Wars*, with restored scenes never seen before, featuring characters Han Solo and Jabba the Hutt.

—Cindy Pearlman

StaLLONE LoVES DRedd

When Sylvester Stallone armored up and donned the Judge Dredd helmet, he found freedom. "You have license to go above and beyond the bounds of good taste, or common sense," the square-jawed actor grinned. "You can push it and still say, OK, it's not me, it's

STARGATE photo courtesy of Everett Collection

a comic character. And it needs to be pushed. That's the beauty of it. It's larger than life, and you get to pull out all the stops. As a matter of fact, if you try to play it normal, it dies. Everything must be 50 percent larger than you think it is, just to keep up with the sets!"

The film is directed by Danny Cannon, a 27-year-old Brit who was weaned on the *Dredd* comic books and felt very protective of their integrity. It's a futuristic vision of the world as a place where anarchy is held at bay by the Judges, who are street cops that act as judge, jury and executioner. A visual melange of *Star Wars*, *Blade Runner* and *Escape from New York*, *Judge Dredd* is an eye-popper, but may evoke some grumbling among loyal readers.

"I don't know if some of the people who are into the purest Dredd are going to get upset," Stallone pondered, "because he never takes his helmet off in the book. But we felt that he had to remove his helmet in the film, to make him a more humanistic character. He, in the book, is the biggest bastard that ever was born. He is *mean*—he would arrest his mother. I mean that. If he had one! With the film, I got a chance to add a little bit of humor in him."

Although the filmmakers insisted that there are no plans in place for a sequel (at least until they see how this film is received), Stallone isn't adverse to returning to the character of Dredd. In fact, he claimed, "You know what the truth is? You may not believe it, but this is my favorite comic book. I love Judge Dredd. I think it's so beyond your wildest dreams! It's hard-core stuff. I'd love to play him again."

—Jenny Peters

Metropolis Joins the Support for Reeve

Superman might be down, but his fans aren't letting him down. Ever since Supermovie actor Christopher Reeve's riding accident left him paralyzed from the neck down after being thrown from a horse during a tournament this summer, the people of Metropolis, Illinois, a tiny town in the downstate area, have been sending him cards, letters and wishes of support. "It has been really touching," a Reeve spokesperson said. "This boosts his spirits."

And how much fan mail has Reeve received?

"Tons," said publicity assistant Stephanie Casat. "Thousands and thousands of pieces of mail."

As Reeve recovers, the fate of another Superman movie remains up in the air. "I'm not really interested in being Superman again," Reeve said this spring before his accident. "I know the producer Jon Peters is looking into another film with a younger Superman, which is fine with me. I think that's a role that you play and then retire. No one can keep it forever."

No word from the Peters camp on whether they planned any special tribute to or mention of Reeve in the upcoming Superman film, which is still in the planning stage.

Reeve said he's not even a fan of TV's *Lois & Clark* series. "I always miss it, but not on purpose. I'm usually busy on Sunday nights," he said.

To send get-well wishes to Reeve, write to the University of Virginia Medical Center, Jefferson Park Ave., Charlottesville, VA 22908.

In other Superman-related news, a Superman animated television series by the creative minds behind the critically praised Batman animated series will begin airing in the fall of 1996. Information is sketchy at this point, but it is known that Batman animated alums Bruce Timm and Paul Dini will be helming the project. Plans call for Superman to roll out with 13 episodes next year, followed by a reported guaranteed pick-up of 52 additional episodes in 1997.

—Cindy Pearlman, Marc Shapiro

'Cin' City

After just a few sterling installments, Frank Miller's *Sin City* has established itself as the *noir*-est comic series around. Now if only a studio exec would get hip and put the exploits of wild Dwight McCarthy, manic Marv, and Miller's other way-flawed heroes on *film*. Well, it turns out, one just might: New Line Cinema production head Michael De Luca, a Gen X-er in all but his lack of underachievement, and a big-time *Sin City* devotee. Still riding high from his prescient decision to greenlight *The Mask* for production, De Luca said recently that a possible *Sin City* adaptation ranks high on his wish list. "The book is my favorite thing out there right now," he said. "And usually if I find something I want, I go after it."

As thrilled as Miller himself would be to see Dwight McCarthyism sweep Hollywood, he continues to play it cool. "Planned movie projects so often don't actually get made; I won't believe it until I'm on the set," he said.

Still, New Line's interest would seem to present an attractive avenue back into the screen trade for Miller, who wrote the second and third *RoboCop* movies, but has since kept a low profile on this front. "The screenwriting has been on hold, mostly because I've just really been on fire with the comics," he admitted. Even so, he added with a laugh, "I've been playing around with a few ideas, so the next time I find myself getting restless, sure, I'll go get beat up by Hollywood again."

—Tom Russo

Sylvester Stallone might do a sequel to the film *Judge Dredd*.

Christopher Reeve photo courtesy of Everett Collection..

Terminator attraction

Apparently, it'll take more than a vat of molten steel to guarantee that the Terminator won't be *baaach*. Universal Studios Florida recently announced plans to team up with Arnold Schwarzenegger, director James Cameron and F/X-pert Stan Winston on a new Terminator entertainment attraction slated to open early next summer.

Billed as *Terminator 2: Battle Across Time*, this quasi-sequel will in fact be an extension of the *T2* feature, and will incorporate both live-

Felix the Cat is looking forward to his own cartoon series on CBS.

action elements and sensory motion effects. The centerpiece of the attraction will be a 10-minute 3-D movie shot last spring and expected to carry a final price tag of $25 million—an impressive investment, given that *T2* cost around $90 million for well over two hours of cutting-edge footage.

Spokespeople for Universal and Cameron's Lightstorm Entertainment said *Battle Across Time* will differ substantially from such "ride movies" as Disney's Star Tours and Universal's own *Back to the Future*: The Ride, but both reps were maddeningly short on details. Better say your piece soon, though, guys—that 1997 Judgment Day deadline is coming up fast.

—Tom Russo

Disney Cranks 'em Out

With this summer's release of *Pocahontas*, Walt Disney's 33rd animated feature, the company has cemented its stronghold on the world of top-quality animation. While in the old days it was years between the release of each of the company's animated features, now they're being scheduled fast and furious, with an ambitious slate of two films released per year, on track well into the 21st century.

"I think it's unfair to call it an assembly line," insisted Peter Schneider, the president of Disney's Feature Animation Division. "I understand it may feel like that, in some sense. But it certainly is not our intention. It's really about giving filmmakers an opportunity to make movies. And because the process is made better by keeping people around for long periods of time, one has to schedule it so that the artists are available to the filmmakers to make movies. It's cost-effective to hire somebody for three or four years, as long as you have a series of movies coming down."

His division now employs 1,200 people in three studios (California, Florida and France), a dramatic contrast from only 175 employees in 1985. "For the longest time, nobody in this country wanted to know about animation," said *Pocahontas* director and animation artist Eric Goldberg. "They were looking at it and saying, 'Who cares? That's good for cereal commercials, and that's that.' Now these movies have attained a popularity that is equal to the stature of live-action films, which is a great place to be."

It's a place chock-a-block with opportunity, as the division revs up for a massive push into the new century. Next up, due this Thanksgiving, is *Toy Story*, the company's first completely computer-animated feature. Tom Hanks and Tim Allen lend their voices to this tale of toys that come alive. In the final stages of hand-drawn animation is a retelling of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, scheduled for summer 1996. Actors Tom Hulce and Demi Moore lend their voices to the two lead roles in that one.

Rounding out the current slate are *Hercules*, planned for summer 1997; *The Legend of Mulan*, a Chinese folktale; and *Tarzan*, a retelling of Edgar Rice Burroughs' classic jungle yarn. Perhaps the most ambitious of all is *Fantasia Continued*, the pet project of Walt's nephew, Roy Disney, featuring six classical music pieces conducted by James Levine. Watch for that one in 1998.

—Jenny Peters

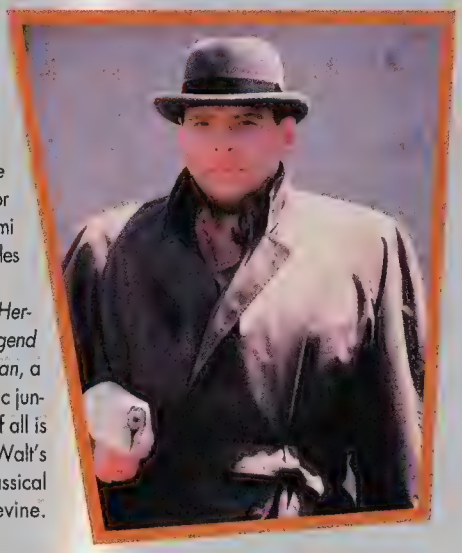
The Cat's Meow

CBS television has given that rarity, a full 13-episode commitment, to *The New Adventures of Felix the Cat* beginning this fall. Film Roman will create the project. The look of the show will fall to producer Timothy Bergland and senior designer Michael Deiderich. The executive producers are Phil Roman and Don Oriolo. The show's writers are Martin Olson and Jeremy Kramer, while the four individual units will be directed by Lynn Naylor, Milton Knight, Dominic Polcino and Robin Steele. With the 13-episode commitment, CBS has promised Felix production company Rough Trade, famous for its work on *The Simpsons* and *The Critic*, total creative control. *The New Adventures of Felix the Cat* will air Saturday at 11 a.m. (EST).

—Marc Shapiro

OuttAKes

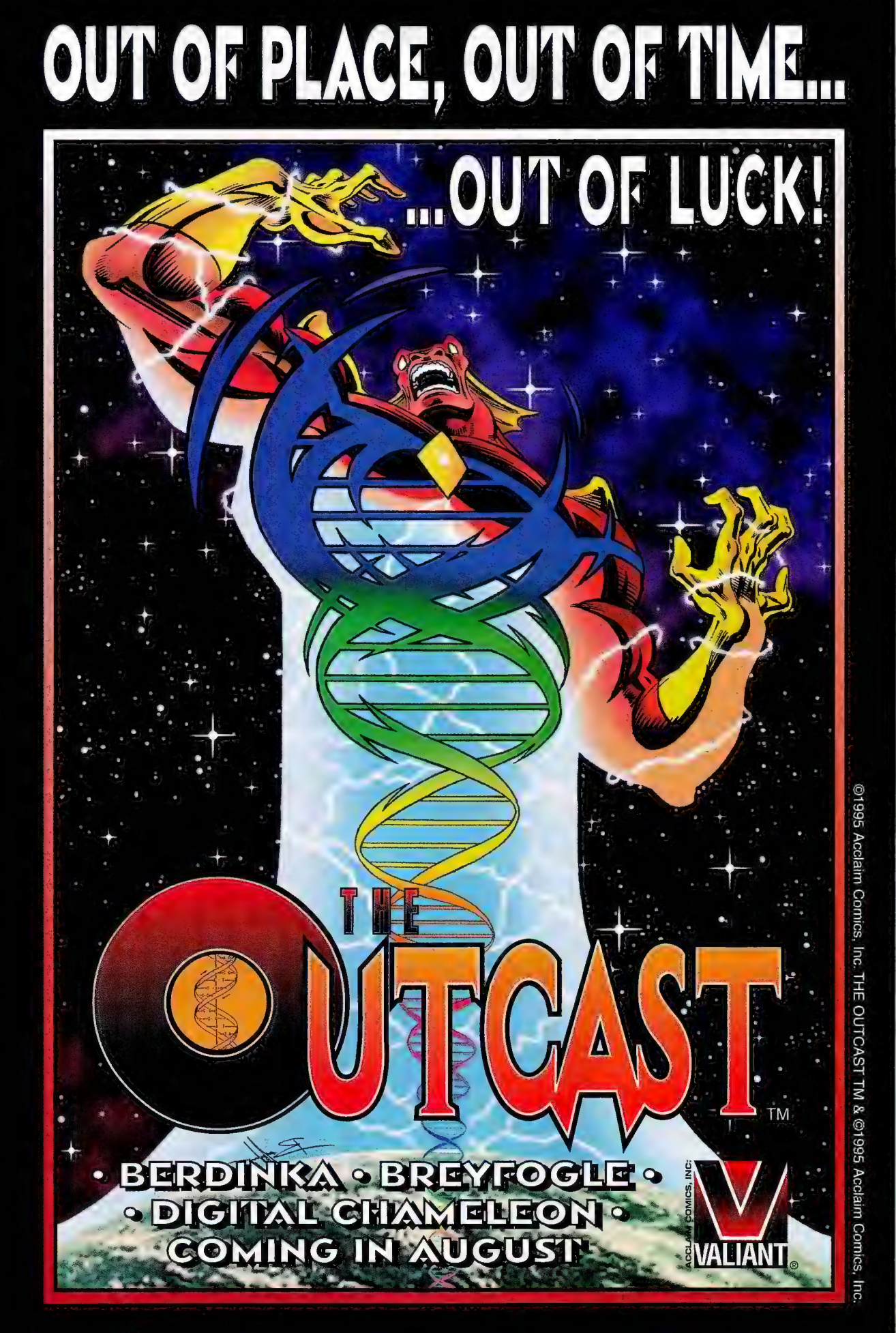
Be on the lookout for creators from the Legend comic book imprint to make cameos in the upcoming *Barb Wire* film, starring Pamela Lee....More famous names will be sitting across the couch on upcoming episodes of *Space Ghost: Coast To Coast*. Guesting on episodes throughout the year will be wrestler/actor Hulk Hogan, Alice Cooper, Michael Stipe of R.E.M., David Byrne, Sandra Bernhard, Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth and *The Simpsons*' Matt Groening....It's the end of the line for the animated *The Little Mermaid*, which has been canceled by CBS. The show ran for a total of three seasons and includes a total of 30 episodes....Continuing to wield a bloody ax, CBS also showed *Garfield and Friends* the door after seven seasons and 121 episodes....Given an additional eight-episode life is the show *Aladdin*....The direct-to-video *Darkman II: The Return of Durant* adventure



Larry Drake comes back as Durant in *Darkman II: The Return of Durant*.

arrives in video stores this July, starring Arnold Vosloo (*Hard Target*) and Larry Drake as returning villain Durant. This is the first of a direct-to-video Darkman series, under executive producers and Darkman creators Sam Raimi (writer-director of the original 1990 film) and Robert Tapert....A one-hour Terry and the Pirates live-action TV series is in the works. The buzz is that Terry will be on TV screens before year's end. Co-producer Michael Uslan said an announcement is pending, and also hinted that a Spirit film, featuring Will Eisner's classic character, is also in development....Having already had their "final" exploits, Jason of the *Friday the 13th* franchise and Freddy Krueger of the *Nightmare on Elm Street* franchise are teaming up courtesy of New Line Cinema. According to New Line's Michael De Luca, production on *Freddy vs. Jason* will begin sometime next year. ☆

FELIX THE CAT ™ & © King Features Syndicate. Larry Drake photo by Melinda Sue Gordon.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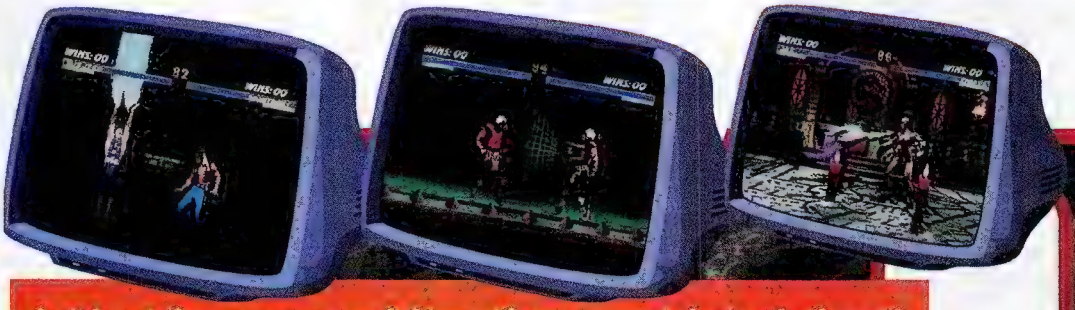
KONTESI

Midway Presents:

The Choose Your Kombatant Kontest

Y'know, every time we here at ***Wizard*** have a couple extra quarters in our pockets, we truck on down to the local arcade to play a little ***Mortal Kombat 3***. And believe it or not, we probably have the most fun selecting our Kombatants. Will it be an old guard like Sub-Zero or Sonya? Or one of the new breed like Sheeva or Kabal? We like deciding, and now we'd like to see what you'd do.



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For the winner's name, available after October 15, 1995, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Choose Your Kombatant Kontest Winner, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

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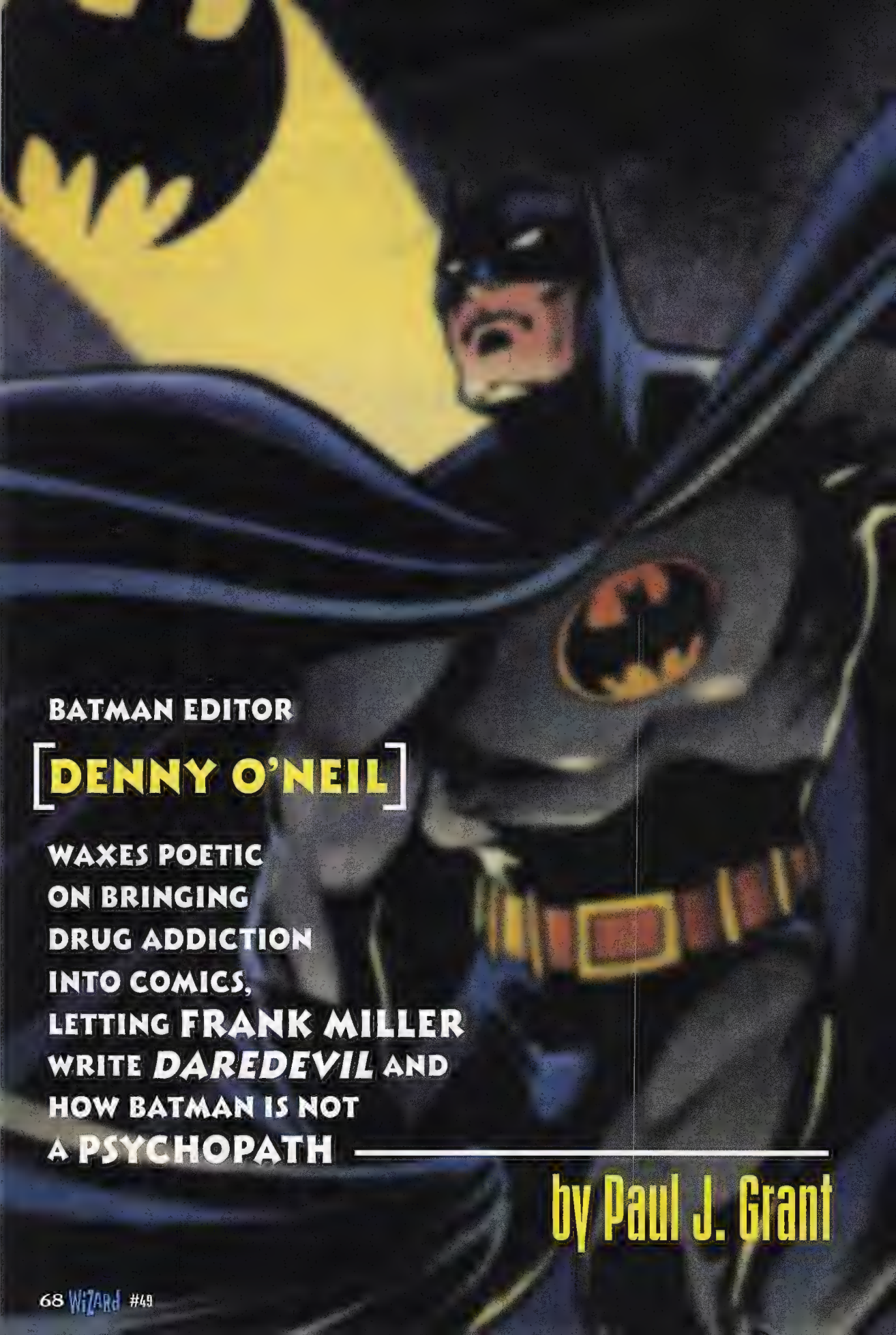

BATMAN EDITOR

[DENNY O'NEIL]

WAXES POETIC ON BRINGING DRUG ADDICTION INTO COMICS, LETTING FRANK MILLER WRITE *DAREDEVIL* AND HOW BATMAN IS NOT A PSYCHOPATH

by Paul J. Grant

Keeper of the KNIGHT

Dennis O'Neil was born in May of 1939, which is, perhaps coincidentally, when Batman was born in *Detective Comics #27*, something the editor and sometime-writer of DC Comics' Batman line of books says he doesn't "like to think about too much." Perhaps no one else besides Bob Kane has been closer tied to the character of Batman, at least since the dawn of the Silver Age. O'Neil has written scores of Bat-stories, created Azrael (with artist Joe Quesada) and has served as the editor of the core Batman titles at DC since 1985, bringing the character to new heights. At that's just one facet of O'Neil's long and distinguished career at DC, Marvel Comics and Charlton Comics, beginning with a brief stint as an editorial assistant at Marvel under Editor-in-Chief Stan Lee and editor Roy Thomas at Marvel in 1965.

WIZARD: How did you come to Roy Thomas' attention?

DENNIS O'NEIL: I was a reporter on a small newspaper in Cape Girardeau, Miss., and I did two articles on comic books. Roy's parents were subscribers to the paper, and Roy was making the transition from English teacher to comics professional, so I did a third article about Roy. About a month later, I got the Marvel Writer's Test from him, which consisted of four pages of the Fantastic Four without copy, and he said, "Do you want to take this test and try out to be an editorial assistant?" I filled in the word balloons with dialogue, and a week later he called with a job offer. It was too good to pass up, but I don't think I was too serious about it as a lifetime career choice.

What did you do as an editorial assistant?

I wrote some copy, did some proofreading and letter pages, and wrote some of the books that neither Roy nor Stan wanted to deal with—*Millie the Model*, *Patsy & Hedy*, some Westerns. One of the reasons Roy and I were hired was that Stan had run the shop by himself, [writing and editing] everything, and it became too much work for one guy. I was the third guy in editorial, but it only lasted six months. Stan became disenchanted with me, so I went freelance. I did a lot of other work in those early days, but kept coming back to comics. I seemed to have an aptitude for them. I was still doing a lot of work for Marvel, then I heard that [artist-editor] Dick Giordano was looking for writers for Charlton, so I went to see him, and for a while I was working for both companies.

What were your responsibilities at Charlton?

You name it. I did what passed for humor in those days, some Westerns, an issue of *Thunderbolt*. One thing that I still occasionally hear about is a one-shot called "Children of Doom," which appeared in *Charlton Premiere* #2, that occasionally makes somebody's "10 Best [Stories]" list. There were no consequences attached to these things. We were doing them for four bucks a page, and there was no such thing as royalty or reprint money. It was a great freedom and a great sort of learning experience.

When did you make the move to DC?

In 1967 or 1968, Dick Giordano asked me, "How would you like to do exactly what you're doing now, but for three times the money?" What had happened was Dick was hired by DC, and brought along with him five freelancers—[writer] Steve Skeates, [artists] Steve Ditko, Pat Boyette, Jim Aparo and me.

Describe what DC was like in the late '60s.

Photo by Al Ortego

VITAL STATS:

Name: **Dennis O'Neil**
Date of Birth: **May, 1939 in St. Louis, Miss.**
Occupation: **DC Comics Group Editor, writer**
Base of Operations: **New York**
Nickname: **Denny**
Career Highlights: **Returned Batman to his darker roots with artist Neal Adams in the early '70s; among the first to write socially relevant stories in the critically acclaimed *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* with Adams; edited Frank Miller's original run on *Daredevil*, as well as *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*; oversaw the 1988 "Death of Robin" 900-number reader poll, which saw the demise of the sidekick; spearheaded the recent "Knightfall," "KnightQuest" and "KnightsEnd" stories, which lifted the Batman titles to new sales heights.**

It was a very different place, in that comics were considered drek by a lot of people involved in producing them. I had a sense that the people who were in charge didn't have any respect or interest in them. Some of the freelancers had enthusiasm for what they were doing, but overall, there wasn't much. It was meet-the-deadlines, get-the-stuff-out, and keep-a-low-profile. It was much simpler, because it didn't make any difference who wrote a particular issue of *Potato Salad Man*, except maybe to a few fans out there. The creative people were considered to be interchangeable, and there was no continuity to worry about. If you were the editor of *Batman*, you'd commission Batman stories, and fill up your drawer with them, and when it was time to publish something, you'd pull one out. I'm over-simplifying, but not by a whole lot.

What was your first big-time book?

Your question presupposes that we were assigned to books, and that wasn't true. You dropped off a job, you talked to the editor, he gave you an assignment. It might be *Batman*, it might be *Green Lantern*, but it was never a formal arrangement like it is now. It turned out that, by the time I was done with it, according to [former DC writer-editor] Mike Barr, I'd written 86 Batman stories, but there was never a commitment on my part to the company to write any particular series, or vice versa.

You wrote a lot of Batman stories before you took over *Green Lantern* [in 1970].

I think that was the chronology. [Artist] Neal Adams and I did "Secret of the Waiting Graves" in *Detective Comics* [#295]. DC wasn't doing the TV version of the character anymore, and [DC editor] Julie Schwartz asked me if I'd like to take a crack at him. My brilliant inspiration was to simply take the character back to his roots, which is basically what Neal and I did.

What was it like to work with Neal Adams?

In the sense of collaboration as it's understood today, we didn't. I won't say we never talked over stories, but it wasn't a regular thing at all. When we did the drug stories in *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* [#85-#86], we went around together and interviewed drug rehab people, so I'm sure we must have talked about the direction of the stories then, but it wasn't like [*Batman*'s current writer and artist team] Doug Moench and Kelley Jones talking on the phone three times a week.

The *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* stories have been reprinted so many times they've become part of the curriculum of comics. At the time, was it just another assignment, or did you feel like you were onto something special?

After a while, we knew that we were doing something that hadn't been done in comics before, that we were pushing the envelope of the superhero medium. That made it exciting.

Where did you get the idea of teaming the two characters, and doing socially relevant stories?

I was still doing a lot of journalism, and for a long time I had wondered about combining my two vocations. Along comes Julie Schwartz, who says, "This book seems to have lost its way. Do you have any ideas?" It was a no-lose situation. If we failed, the book was in a decline anyhow. It was much more freedom than I'd been offered in writing comic books up to that point. There were a number of things that I was genuinely concerned about, and still am. The initial impetus for the series came from the idea of combining real-life concerns with the kind of extravagant fantasy/melodrama that superhero comics are.

As for Green Arrow, we needed to set up a dialectic, and we needed someone for the

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kind of straight-arrow cop that I conceived Green Lantern to be to play off of. Green Arrow had been around since the early '40s, but he didn't have a personality, so we could do anything we wanted with him.

Why did you turn Green Arrow's teen sidekick Speedy into a drug addict?

I was living in a neighborhood that was full of drug addiction. So if we were doing a series about problems the country was facing, we would have to do a story about drug addiction. Ask me now, and I'd say that alcohol addiction is a much bigger problem than heroin addiction, but at the time I didn't think so. I eventually got around to that when I made Tony Stark [a.k.a. Iron Man] an alcoholic [for a second time] when I was writing *Iron Man* [for Marvel]. Maybe in terms of comics, the most radical thing we did was take an established hero like Speedy and make him a junkie.

Bear in mind that nothing like this had been done before. It was real heresy for the time, and putting it on the cover was flaunting the heresy. We had the Comics Code seal on our books, so we did have to make a few changes, all of which I thought were ill-advised, and I could use stronger language if there weren't a tape recorder running. [Editor's Note: The Comics Code is a list of content guidelines, set up by the Comics Code Authority in 1954, that publishers have to follow in order to keep the Code seal on their books' covers. The seal makes it easy for parents to know it's a "safe" comic for their children to read.]

The sales on *Green Lantern* did not pull up sufficiently to keep the book going, however, so it was more of a critical success than a financial one.

Insofar as there was such a thing as comic book criticism, we were a big success. It was the first success that got comic book guys invited on talk shows, and got written about in newspapers. Neal and I were possibly the first comic book celebrities, but there was no machinery in place for exploiting that.

Why did you leave DC for an editorial position at Marvel Comics in 1978?

I felt that I had hit a dead end there. I was a very reliable writer, but I wasn't getting the interesting assignments anymore, and began to worry that I was becoming a Xerox machine. I was looking for a way to earn my living that would depend to some degree more on experience and knowledge than on writing talent. [Former Marvel Editor-in-Chief] Jim Shooter offered me a job as an editor. I took that back to DC, whose reply was to increase my earnings by giving me more writing. That wasn't what I was looking for, so I went to Marvel for seven years.

What fond memories do you have of that period?

The first couple of years were wonderful. The company was in an upsurge, and I was working with a lot of really interesting young talent, like [writer-artist] Frank Miller, who had just started on *Daredevil*.

At the time Miller came to you and said he wanted to write the book after a year of drawing it, it was very uncommon for an artist to want to write. How did he convince you?

The book's sales were going up, but there was disagreement between Frank and [series writer] Roger McKenzie, who were [good friends], and I didn't know which one to choose. I'm not Solomon, so I made the decision on commercial grounds, feeling that the art had more to do with the book's success than the writing. Frank had done a credible job writing an eight-page back-up story, so reluctantly, I split the team, and then Frank became the writer—at first with a lot of editorial input, but that diminished. He would turn in a new book every three weeks, and I had to remind myself to read it critically, because I was reading it for pleasure.

Besides editing, you also wrote several titles.

I wrote *Amazing Spider-Man* at first for a little over a year, then *Iron Man* for three years, and *Daredevil* for about two years after Frank left. *Daredevil* was an act that nobody wanted to follow, and it was probably not wise of me to follow, but I did, and at least I eventually had the advantage of working with [artist] Dave Mazzucchelli.

Why did you decide to leave Marvel?

As gently as I can put it, there were serious disagreements between myself and my boss.

That being Jim Shooter.

Yeah. It was becoming harder for me to function in either capacity, as writer or editor.

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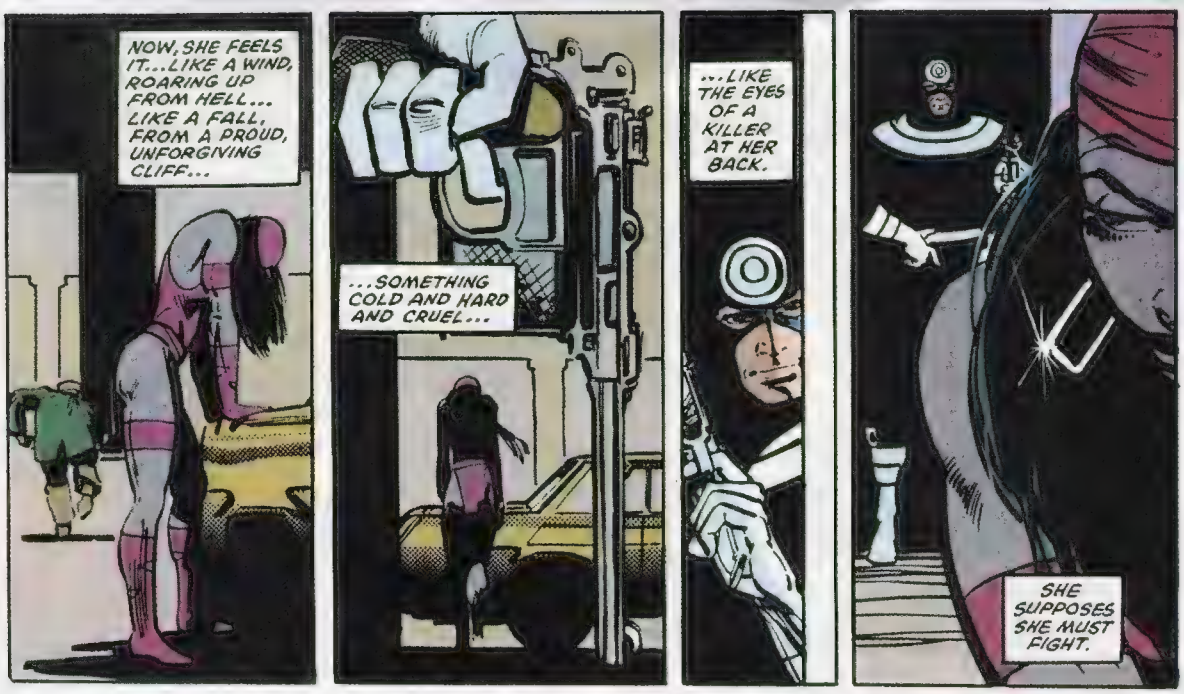

O'NEIL TOOK A CHANCE ALLOWING A YOUNG ARTIST NAMED FRANK MILLER THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRY HIS HAND AT BOTH WRITING AND DRAWING *DAREDEVIL*. THE REST IS HISTORY.

When did DC offer you a job as Batman editor?

I had first been offered the job in 1982 by Dick Giordano, who had become DC's editorial director. I was set to do it, then I had a brush with heart disease, and my doctors said don't take a chance on losing your medical coverage, so I hung onto the Marvel job. When Dick offered me the job a second time in 1984, I was very inclined to take it. So I quit and called Dick, and said, "When do you want me to start?" He said, "Oh, we filled the job." So I was without a job for three weeks, but I had a *Shadow* graphic novel to write [*Marvel Graphic Novel* #35], so that filled that time. One day around Christmas, I found a message on my machine saying, "Welcome aboard. You start on January 2."

Were you given a particular agenda as Batman editor, or did you bring one with you?

I knew that [DC was] not satisfied, and sales were not what it wanted, so I saw my agenda as to make some changes, and make 'em big and noisy. With great pain and reluctance, I got rid of most of the creative team, although one of them [*Batman* writer Doug Moench] I hired back as soon as I possibly could. I felt it was necessary to send a message to the readership that we're starting fresh here, so everybody down to the letterer and colorist was replaced.

So who did you bring in?

A whole bunch of people. Some of them worked out, and some of them didn't. I don't want to get into that. I made some bad casting decisions. We floundered for a while. The first thing that I was really happy with was getting [artist] Jim Aparo back. He's a writer's dream, in that he will find a way, no matter what dumb thing you ask him to do, to do it. And he's even more of an editor's dream, because he would do one page a day and it would always be perfect.

Currently, Batman is primarily in the hands of three writers: Chuck Dixon, Alan Grant and Doug Moench [writing *Detective Comics*, *Batman: Shadow of the Bat* and *Batman*, respectively].

My three main men. I think they are the three best pros in the business, and it's not an accident that they're working for me. First and foremost, they're storytellers who have chosen to work in this medium, rather than people who just love comics so much that they have to get into them somehow. They understand the responsibilities that come from being a professional writer, and all three are good at all the Batman elements: mood, action, mystery and some element of detective work.

There's a criticism that you can give yourself the "plum" editing assignments, like the *Batman/Punisher* crossover, *Sword of Azrael* and the movie adaptations. What's your response to this?

Most of these better assignments were given to me by other editors and staffers. For instance, it was the writers' consensus to give me "Knightfall." And I don't consider the Batman movie adaptations to be a "plum" assignment.

One of the most controversial events early in your tenure as editor was when Jim Starlin came on and wrote the "Death of Robin [a.k.a. Jason Todd]" epic, the outcome of which was left to public vote [via a 900-number telephone call]. Was there ever any doubt that the character would be killed off?

Absolutely! Dick Giordano would have bet you $1,000 that he wouldn't be. I thought it would be a landslide thumbs down, and he thought it would be a landslide thumbs up. I voted thumbs up, because as we got further into the stunt I realized that I would have a colossal editorial problem if Jason Todd did not survive, and I did. Both Dick and I were wrong about the landslide. It was about 54 votes, very close.

Eventually, you brought in a third Robin.

All credit to [writers] Marv Wolfman and Chuck Dixon for that. I think the third is the best of them.

Why do you think there needs to be a Robin at all?

For a long time, I didn't think so. As a writer, I sent the first Robin [a.k.a. Dick Grayson] off to [Hudson] University at one point. I've changed my mind about that to some degree. It's always useful for the hero to have a sidekick to be a surrogate for the audience, to express admiration for the hero in the way the hero cannot do. It also gives the character someone to play off of and explain things to, as a means of exposition. Robin and Alfred also lighten things up a bit. There's always a danger of Batman becoming so grim that it's not entertaining anymore.

Let's talk about Batman, Azrael and the dichotomy of heroism that was at the heart of "Knightfall" [1993's 19-part story where the villain Bane broke Batman's spine and Bruce Wayne was subsequently replaced in the Bat-role by a psychotic young vigilante called Azrael].

"Knightfall" was the most interesting thing I'd ever done, because it was a very complicated story, but dammit, it was a story, and it was thought out pretty much ahead of time. From the very beginning, it was going to be

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a story that dealt with the question of "What is a hero?" As a kid, I saw heroes who did not love violence and never killed unless they had to, and nowadays in movies the body count hits 70 before the credits are over and people laugh at somebody dying in some unimaginably horrible way. All of this struck me as very anti-humanistic.

"Knightfall" started with two things. Over lunch in London one day, Peter Milligan, who was writing *Detective* at the time, said he'd like to put someone else in the Batsuit for a couple of issues. Peter left the assignment shortly thereafter, but that stuck in my head. We paid Peter for the idea; we're not this heartless capitalist thing that we're supposed to be. That got combined with the other idea, to explore what it means to be Batman.

Before we were done, there were 71 comic books, a BBC radio series and a novel which I wrote in six months. It was an interesting mountain to climb, and I never want to climb it again, but I had the privilege that I don't think has been given to any other storyteller in history, of telling the same story in three different media simultaneously. And telling a story about a character who's probably recognized by 80 percent of the civilized people on the planet.

Was Azrael based in part upon your Catholic school upbringing?

Not consciously, although that seems to be creeping into it. At first, I just needed an anti-Batman. Azrael was a plot necessity. He was created to serve a function in that big overall story.

You're now writing the ongoing *Azrael* series every month. Where do you plan on taking the character now that you've essentially given him a clean slate?

In the first set of story arcs that comprise the first year and a half, he will have an identity. He will come to terms with who and what he is. That doesn't mean all the problems associated with that will go away, but at least he will have the sort of self-knowledge that any sane person ought to have. He will also have a franchise, a thing that he does with his powers that none of the other superheroes do. Right now, by my definition, he's not a hero, because he's being led by forces he doesn't understand and can't control.

Over the years, Batman is the character with whom you've been most associated. How have your feelings about the character evolved over time?

I've probably thought more about Batman than anybody, apart from my child. In college writing classes, they teach us to write what we know. Well, I have never been on a rooftop at three o'clock in the morning waiting for a maniacal serial killer, but I've written that scene any number of times. I think you write to your fantasies, to the archetypes that appeal to you, and when you inherit a character you—mostly subconsciously—shape the character to something that you're comfortable with. Since taking over the job of Batman editor, I've had to think about him a lot in terms of archetypes and mythos.

One word that has been bandied about regarding Batman over the years has been "psychopath."

Not by me. By another prominent writer who's handled the character.

Frank Miller?

Yeah, that would be a name that would come right to mind. This is a deceptively complicated question. Batman is like *Hamlet*; there's no one right way to do it. I don't quarrel with any of my predecessors' interpretations. I find some of them far more entertaining than others, but I don't consider any of them "wrong," in the way that fans sometimes vehemently denounce something. I reject the label; I don't reject somebody else's right to *interpret* him that way. It's largely a matter of emphasis.

Where do you think the emphasis should be placed?

He's got to be a hero, and that precludes psychopath. A psychopath can't be a hero. Psychopath indicates a lack of volition, and you have to be able to make choices, or you're not a hero, you're just some kind of mechanism. The other element which is relevant here is the refusal to take human life. Psychopaths and sociopaths are absolutely indifferent to the suffering of others. One of the elements of Batman that we don't play up very much is his compassion. He feels for the victims and takes no joy in causing pain. That's a lot of what "Knightfall" was about: what the word "hero" means in the '90s. One of the concerns I had was that our interpretation had become outdated, which doesn't seem to be the case, thank heaven.

Could Bruce Wayne ever retire [as Batman]?

He gets an enormous amount of satisfaction being Batman, but could stop at any time and eventually will. In my private biography, when Bruce Wayne turns 50 at the latest, he'll stop this and I hope, for his sake, discover women and the joys of home and hearth.

How do view your relationship to Batman?

When we did the "Death of Robin," I realized that I had been thinking about my job incorrectly. I'd been thinking of myself as a writer and editor, and I realized I am the custodian of folklore.

Would you be comfortable meeting Batman socially?

No! I don't think I'd be able to stand the guy! Think about meeting Batman. This is the most perfectly developed physical specimen on earth. Of course you'd be intimidated! What would you say to him? "Can I have your autograph?" ☆

THE BATMAN ALSO WAXES POETIC...

Paul Grant, who wrote the article on The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot *on page 90, became a part of folklore when he killed Babe the Blue Ox by accident.*

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Creators in motion

Wizard takes a look at eight of Vertigo's most underrated writing talents

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ELAINE LEE
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PAUL JENKINS
MARK MILLAR

8 WRITERS

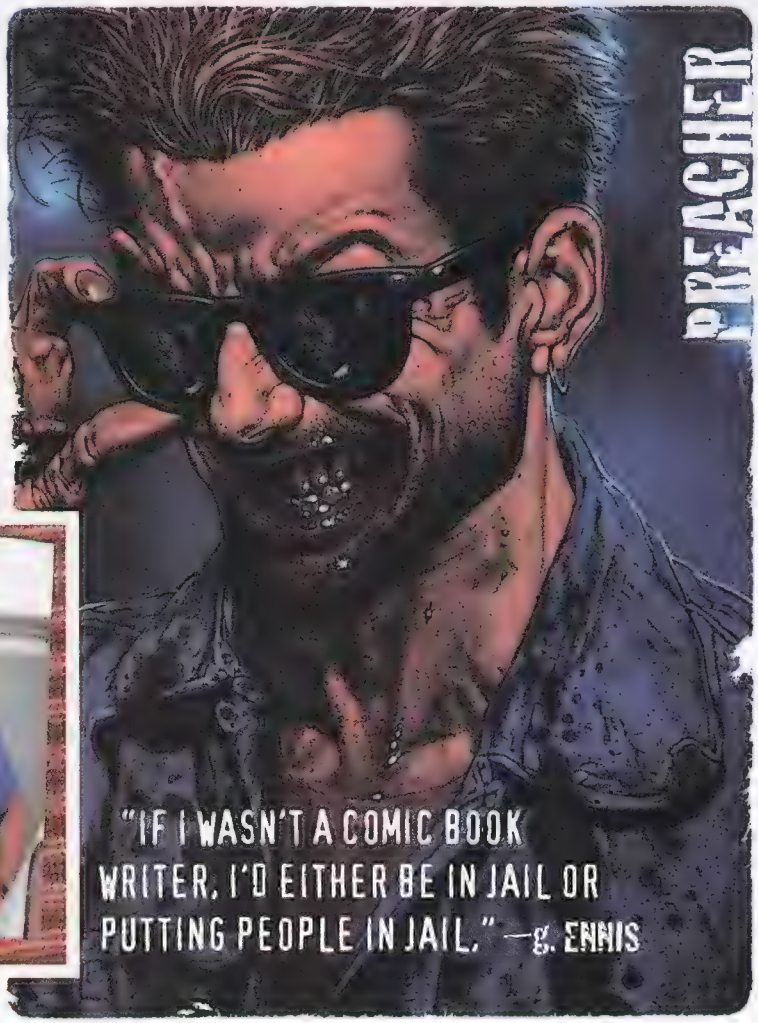
BY MARC SHAPIRO

garth ENNIS

What kind of a mind lurks beneath the pages of a book that's a part of DC Comics' alternative imprint, Vertigo? Let Garth Ennis count the ways. "Qualities like bitterness, surliness, general unpleasantness and a twisted mind tend to score pretty high. So do resentment against large parts of the world and a lack of care for basic human decency."

And how many of these questionable traits fit the good-natured Irishman currently plying his trade on Vertigo's *Preacher*? "I'd say most of them," he chuckles. "If I wasn't a comic book writer, I'd either be in jail or putting people in jail, because most of these traits fit the average police officer."

Ennis, born in Belfast, Ireland, always knew he wanted to write. "But it was only when people began telling me that I could make a living at it that I began to take it seriously." Following an early exit from the academic world ("After three months, I found college an absolutely miserable experience, so I dropped out."), he made his first comic sale to a local publication called *Crisis*, which soon led Ennis to the greener pastures of Judge Dredd assignments for the British comic *2000 A.D.* "I was building my reputation more by accident than by design," he laughs.

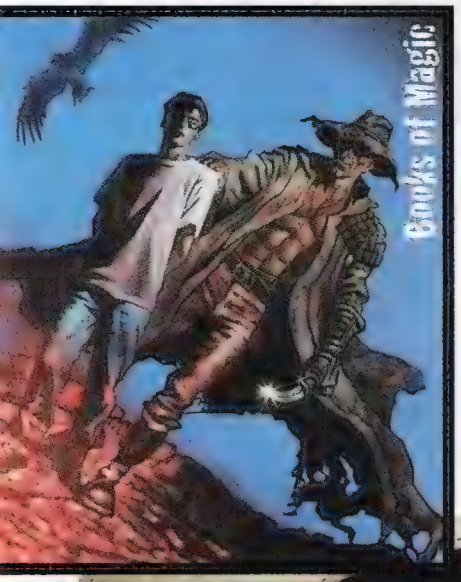


"IF I WASN'T A COMIC BOOK WRITER, I'D EITHER BE IN JAIL OR PUTTING PEOPLE IN JAIL." —g. ENNIS

recalls Lee, had its origin four years ago in a skull session between series artist William Simpson and herself. "[William] wanted to do girl vampires, and I thought, 'Well, let's make them different.' Initially we thought about doing an all-girl vampire rock band, but I thought we'd end up doing pages and pages of them pretending to play their instruments. So I said, 'What about biker girl vampires?'"

Elaine Lee, born and raised in North Carolina, had an active fantasy life: going from comic books as a child to acting as an adolescent and finally to New York City, where—between acting jobs such as the daytime soap opera *The Doctors*—she rediscovered comics. "It was at that point that I started reading *Heavy Metal* magazine and all that stuff that was coming from Europe. It was something new and different, and it got me interested again."

So interested, in fact, that when her idea for a play, entitled *Starstruck*, caught the fancy of comic artist Michael Kaluta, she jumped at the new avocation. *Starstruck*, the comic, made it to *Heavy Metal*. Her *Morgan Tales* appeared in the likes of anthology books like *Epic Illustrated* and *Taboo*, and jobs on the likes of DC's *Ragman*, Marvel's *Prince Valiant* and NBM's erotic anthology *Skintight Orbit* started coming her way with the regularity of the tide. "The big argument is that women can't write superhero and action stories," she says, crossing swords with the stereotype. "Well, we can. We just write them differently. In fact, Vertigo tends to hire women a lot more often than the superhero books do. So I guess they're hip to that."

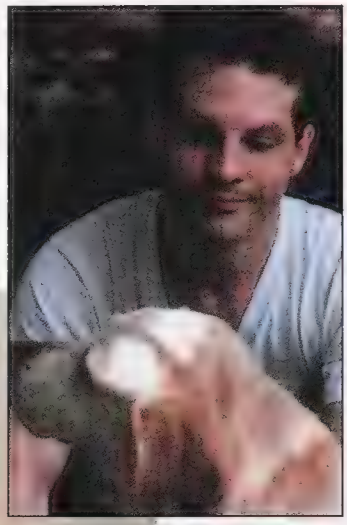


Lee is currently at work on *Vamps 2*, in which the ragtag group of bikers goes to Hollywood. "One of the Vamps wants to break into show business, but that's only going to be the comic subplot. People you don't expect from their past will also turn up," she explains.

Finally, Lee does not necessarily feel she has arrived at the top of the comic book writer's heap. But one incident sticks in her mind that indicates she might be on the right track. "The first time I met [horror novelist] Clive Barker, he told me, 'You're really twisted!' I thought, 'Clive Barker thinks *I'm* twisted? Wow!'"

John NEY RIEBER

His middle name may be Ney. But when John Rieber assesses his reputation of something akin to "awesome" in the comic book world, you can strike Ney and add Humble. "Awesome? That's a laugh. After 20 years of writing stuff that nobody read, it's just great to be read. I'm not kidding myself. I'm not Shakespeare."



Rieber, riding high on the strength of his critically acclaimed *The Books of Magic* series and the anticipated apocalyptic grunge epic *Mythos*, both for Vertigo, continues his long, slow, subtlety humorous brand of self deprecation with a knock at his approach to writing. "I can write stories OK, but outlining [them] is a whole different story. In fact, there's a sort of running joke at Vertigo that, if [the editors] see something in a [story] outline, you can bet I'm going to change my mind when I sit down to write the [actual] story."

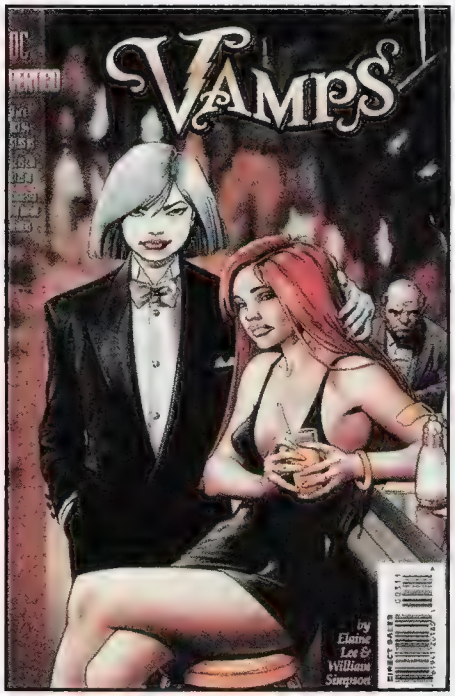
He lists Vertigo's mini-series *Shadows Fall*, DC's *Tommy Dark* and Marvel's 1993 *Wolverine: Killing* as his other greatest hits. Rieber is also in the minority. "I'm American," he chuckles. "And it's funny, because people who read my stuff are appalled when they find out that I was born and raised in the U.S. They always say something like, 'I thought you couldn't work for Vertigo unless you were a Brit.' What they don't realize is that American writers can be dark and twisted, too."

This dark and twisted soul, born and raised in Southern Texas, got an early start. "I started locking myself in my room with a typewriter at age 7," he recalls. An avid comic book reader, Rieber, in later years, "lost interest when Berni Wrightson stopped [drawing] *Swamp Thing* and Frank Brunner stopped [drawing] *Doctor Strange*." He later lost interest in formal education "and dropped out of high school to work in restaurants and write stories."

His reputation reached across the Atlantic and led to a telephone call from Vertigo to hop on *Hellblazer*. Coincidentally, his *Hellblazer* work began surfacing about the time his long-in-the-works *Goddess* mini-series was finished. "The *Goddess* proposal went in in 1989 and I started writing it in '92," says Ennis of the delay in the mini-series whose first issue shipped this past spring. "But you know how it is with meticulous artwork. It tends to take a little time."

DC's *Demon* and his creator-owned *Preacher* for Vertigo were the next notches on Ennis' belt, which in turn led to a Punisher one-shot for Marvel Comics, as well as the upcoming *Hitman*, a *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* one-shot called *Heartland* and a *Judge Dredd: Legends of the Law* story arc that remains shrouded in mystery, all for DC. "In theory, this is how it happens," explains Ennis of his big workload. "As long as your stuff is good, the response is good and you don't do anything to put any major noses out of joint, you're in. If the audience decides that your stuff sucks, then your career [gets] knocked in the head."

While Ennis offers that the *Goddess* mini-series effectively completes its main character's quest, he warns gleefully that there's a lot more *Preacher* to come. "The next storyline is set in New York [City], where Jesse [the main character] begins a search for God in some rather unlikely places and gets involved in an underworld of corrupt cops and pornography. There will also be something of an origin story later in the year, where Jesse goes to take care of business with his family and runs up against his hideous grandmother."



The writer, who claims to be "incredibly fond of *Preacher* at the moment" with series co-creator/artist Steve Dillon, jumps back to what makes the ideal Vertigo writer tick. "A nasty sense of humor helps. Laughing at the afflicted is a good one. A strong sense of social injustice helps. In fact, that might actually be my one redeeming feature. But that could just be a part of the surliness."

"YOU CAN'T BE NERVOUS ABOUT SHOWING ALL THE PARTS OF YOURSELF, ESPECIALLY YOUR MOST EVIL THOUGHTS."
—e. LEE

elaine LEE

"I think you have to be a little bent," chuckles Elaine Lee, speaking of the mindset necessary to write cutting-edge comics like her Vertigo title *Vamps*. "You can't be nervous about showing all the parts of yourself, especially your most evil thoughts."

Lee's "evil thoughts" have found their way into a myriad of tales including her hot biker babe book *Vamps*, *The Steeltown Rockers* for Marvel, *Starstruck* for *Heavy Metal* magazine, *Saint Sinner* for Marvel's short-lived Razorline imprint based on concepts by horror novelist Clive Barker and *Indiana Jones and the Spear of Destiny* for Dark Horse. And the self-described southern belle claims that a big reason why she's a writing star on the rise is her ability to bring flesh and blood to the paneled page. "I think I'm very good with characters," she offers. "My dialogue is good, and I talk about things that other people don't. I guess I'm a lot like my characters. I know I was pretty mean as a kid," she laughs.

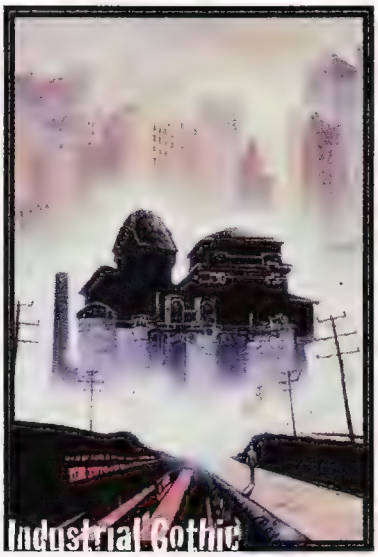
Much of that mean streak slices electric through the pages of *Vamps* which,

PREACHER ™ & © Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon. VAMPS ™ & © Elaine Lee and William Simpson. SHADOWS FALL ™ & © John Ney Rieber and John Van Fleet. THE EXTREMIST ™ & © Peter Milligan and Union City, Inc.All other artwork and characters ™ & © DC Comics.

Rieber rekindled the comic book hots years later when "a friend laid a stack of [Vertigo's] *Sandman* comics on me, and I found out that comics had grown up quite a bit." He soon discovered that his admittedly "oblique" style of writing was perfect for the more adult panels, and began his rise. The consensus was that he supernovaed when he took over for Neil Gaiman, who wrote the original four-issue *The Books of Magic* mini-series, on *Books'* regular series.

"When they decided to make *The Books of Magic* a regular series, Neil decided he just didn't have the time," remembers Rieber. "I had been sending Vertigo a bunch of proposals that did not really thrill anybody, but they were impressed enough that when Neil left, they felt I could handle it. I had one conversation with Neil about what the feel of the book should be, and he said, 'Just be careful not to make it *Hellblazer Jr.*'"

He offers that a large chunk of inspiration for *The Books of Magic* comes from his own misspent youth. "I just remembered what it was like to be a teenage boy. It was a time in my life when nobody was telling me anything that would be helpful in dealing with the things that happened. I was certainly as confused as Tim is, and I remember the awful stuff I was having to deal with as a teenager. The only difference is that with Tim, I've given him a much better ending. Tim gets the good-looking girl. I never did."


Industrial Gothic

Rieber, a big alternative music fan, is using that joy as the springboard for his new *Mythos* series, in which "a musician is being manipulated by a bunch of gods and supernatural creatures intent on his being their instrument to destroy the world."

Rieber admits, at this point in his career, to being more comfortable with the title of comic book writer. "I used to be all apologetic when I first started in comics. I would just mumble something like, 'Oh yeah, I write a bunch of stuff for comics.' But I've gotten over that. Now when people ask me what I do, I tell them I sit in a room by myself most of the day and write down things that never happened and probably never will."

The Extremist

ted McKEEVER

Things that are completely odd to most people are perfectly normal to writer-artist Ted McKeever. How odd is odd? Try this one on for size:

"One day I opened a package that had been sent to me, and there was a half-decomposed deer skull in it," chuckles the writer who tears things up this October with the demented romance that is Vertigo's *Industrial Gothic*. "It was reeking. My wife asked me what I got and I showed her. She looked at it and said, 'No big deal.' She later told a friend that if somebody had sent me a tie, that would have bothered me. And she was right."

Given this penchant for dead animals, it should come as no surprise that *Industrial Gothic* highlights a world where, in the best Romeo and Juliet tradition, a manic depressive and a quadriplegic can fall in love. "Most of the things I do are about crazy people, and I really wanted to do a love story. But I guess I just can't get away from the fact that things that are completely odd seem perfectly natural to me."

What was really odd was that McKeever, born in New York and raised in Miami, would chuck 10 years of steady employment with ABC television and *The Miami Herald* to get into comics. "I didn't want to look back on my life and wonder 'What if?' Most of my family knew what I was thinking, and I finally said it enough times that my mother said, 'Either do it or shut up about it.' So I took my mother's advice and quit my job," he roars.

McKeever didn't know squat about breaking into the business, but a self-produced book got him a helpful, high-profile guru in former Epic Comics Editor-in-Chief Archie Goodwin and independent gigs like Vortex's *Transit*, Mad Dog's *Eddie Current* and Epic's *Plastic Forks*.

Bigger shots were work on Vertigo's *The Extremist* and *Doom Patrol*. McKeever will display how warped he is in a four-issue *Batman: Black and White* anthology, due out next January, in which the writer chose the road not even considered, let alone taken.

"Everybody in the book was doing things like Batman fighting criminals and flying around with bats. I did a story where Batman is in the morgue, where he spends the entire story looking at a victim's body to try and figure out how the murder was committed. Strange, huh?"

McKeever, who also has a Superman Elseworlds project involving Fritz Lang's classic

film *Metropolis* in the works, says he resents the at-large notion that his style is wacky and crazy. "I hate both of those words. That's definitely not me or my work. I just tell a story and I use my voice. Whether or not that makes me different, I don't have a clue."

jerry PROSSER

Jerry Prosser really tries to avoid the tough questions when he can. And so, after mentally scratching his head at the thought of what kind of person he sees when he looks in the mirror, he finally comes up with what he feels is an appropriate response.

"I'm a chick magnet," laughs the tormented soul behind such comic grabbers as Vertigo's *Animal Man* and *Skin Graft* and Dark Horse Comics' *Aliens: Hive* and *Exquisite Corpse*. Prosser, an Oregon resident, seems to relish the idea of normalcy as it pertains to real life and the comic book life and is more than willing to beat the subject to death.

"I think I'm pretty normal," he continues to riff. "I know by Vertigo standards, I'm pretty normal. I'm a total freaked-out book and record buyer, which is about as wacked as I get. As far as I'm concerned, if you don't do the things other people do, then you should be in an institution."

Laughs and Prosser seem to go hand in hand. The biggest yucks came from his family, when he announced he was giving up a fast track to social work to pen comic books. "Sure, they laughed! Wouldn't you? But, hey, I'm laughing all the way to the bank now, because I have the dream job."

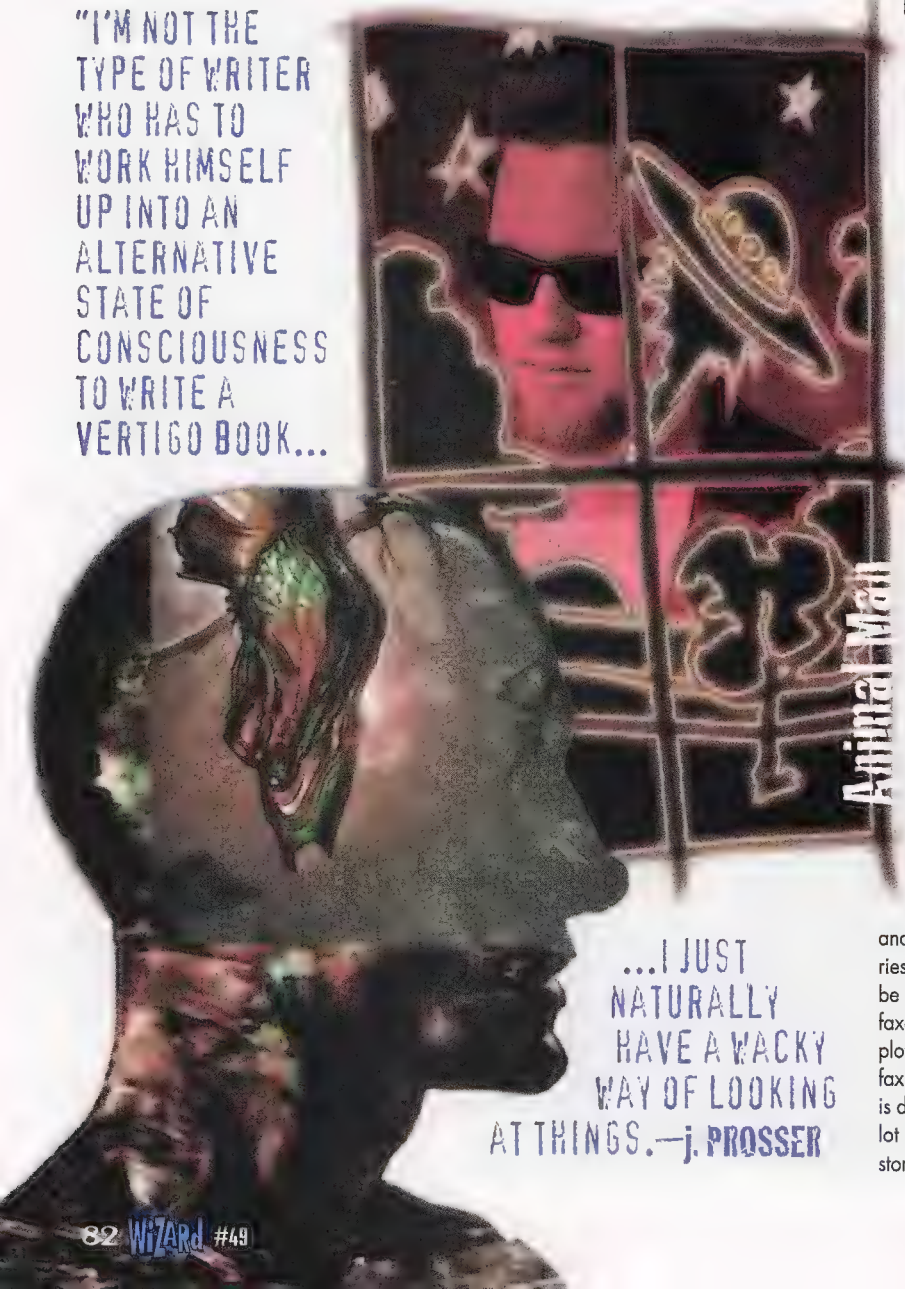
The dream recently took a sidestep into nightmare when it was announced that *Animal Man* had been canceled. Prosser waxes candid. "The book was doing OK, but OK doesn't necessarily cut it these days. There has been a downturn, and the result was that *Animal Man* found its head on the chopping block."

But fans shouldn't fret. Prosser's current writing assignments include *Bram Stoker's Burial of the Rats* and *Caged Heat 3000* for Corman Comics. Prosser, during an editing stint at Dark Horse that finally led to his making the leap into the freelance life, did have to come to grips with some basic fears. "I didn't see what I was doing as a way to make a living for a long time, because I was on the staff at Dark Horse. I was very leery of trying to earn my living at it, because I liked it so much. Because I was approaching what I was doing as an avocation rather than a vocation, it kind of scared me to have to be as professional as I needed to be to survive."

Prosser, in case it's coming slow to you, is your classic easyrider who is quick on the trigger when it comes to rim shots like, "I knew I wanted to make a living in comic books when I got my first check." And his first check has been the jumping-off point for some quietly wacked out hacks at writing conventions as it pertains to the paneled page. Prosser explains his juice this way:

"I'm not the type of writer who has to work himself up into an alternative state of consciousness to write a Vertigo book," he explains during that rare lapse of seriousness. "I just naturally have a wacky way of looking at things. Besides, I don't know of any work-for-hire people who are exorcising any demons."

"I'M NOT THE TYPE OF WRITER WHO HAS TO WORK HIMSELF UP INTO AN ALTERNATIVE STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS TO WRITE A VERTIGO BOOK...



...I JUST NATURALLY HAVE A WACKY WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS.—j. PROSSER

steven T. SEAGLE

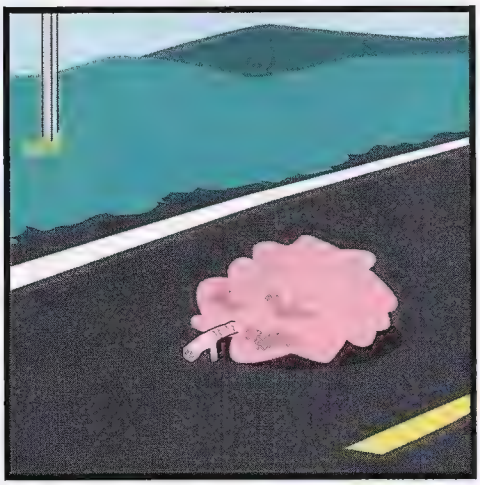
When Steven T. Seagle was a college professor, he was never starved for human contact. But when he turned to comic book writing, he suddenly found himself envying the social life of the Maytag repairman.

"I've gotten to the point where I'm hoping that a cute UPS driver shows up," laughs Seagle whose self-imposed house arrest is the result of his need to churn out tales for Vertigo's *Sandman Mystery Theatre*, Image Comics' *Grifter* and DC's *Primal Force* which is set to be canceled in October. "Everybody thinks it's a vacation to work at home, but it really requires an effort to make a social life. I have to force myself to stop working at a certain time and go out and do things."

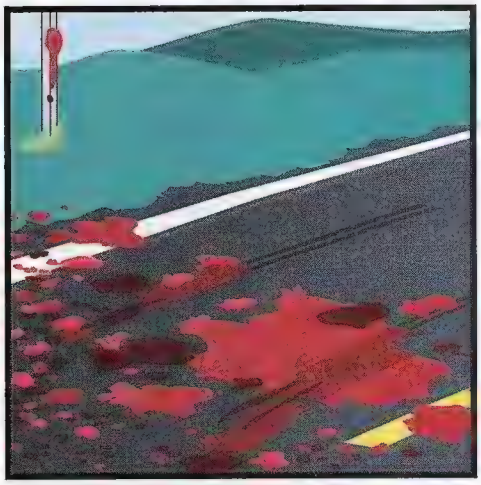
Seagle's *Sandman Mystery Theatre* has allowed him a certain amount of outside contact, as the book is an ongoing collaboration with co-writer Matt Wagner. "Matt and I talk about once a year and basically figure out a year's worth of stories in vague terms, like what the conflict will be and where the relationships will go. Matt faxes me the plots, I put my two cents in, the plots go to the penciler, I dialogue it and then fax it back to Matt. *Sandman Mystery Theatre* is definitely influenced by the pulps. I know a lot of people complain about the four-issue story arcs, but Matt and I deliberately struc-

YOUR BRAIN

(IF SOMEONE WERE TO TAKE IT OUT OF YOUR HEAD AND PUT IT ON THE HIGHWAY)



YOUR BRAIN ON DRUGS



WIZARD **says no to drugs.**

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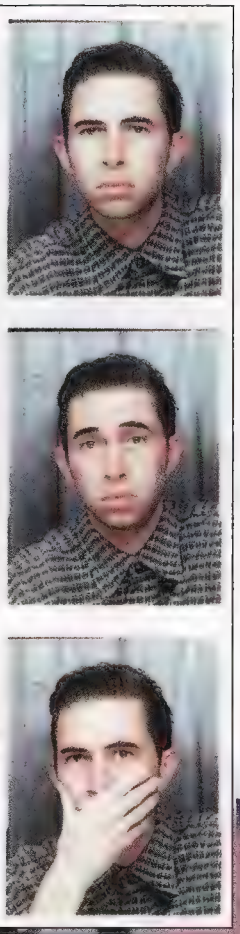
tured it that way to approximate the length of the average pulp. To be perfectly honest, I didn't think this was going to work, because Matt and I are so pig-headed. But it has."

Seagle's own brand of pig-headedness has had him at odds with comic books all his life. "My parents tried to get us to read comic books, and that's probably why I didn't read them as a kid. It was like, 'Here! Read these!' and my brother and I would say, 'We don't want to read them because you gave them to us.'"

While in college, Seagle lucked into some early comics success with the Eisner-nominated *Kafka*, published by Renegade Press and Comico's mini-series *Amazon*. "I had no idea what I was doing. I was totally naïve. I was shocked when Renegade Press called and said they liked my proposal for *Kafka* and needed the first issue in three weeks. My response was, 'Oh, hell! How do I do this? What have I done?'"

After stubbing his toe when a book called *Jaguar Stories* died when Comico folded, Seagle said, "Screw this! I'm going back to teaching." But six years back in class and the encouragement of his good buddy and fellow comics writer James Robinson led Seagle back into comics and eventually into the wild, wild world of Vertigo.



"I think my mind is more geared toward being a Vertigo writer than a more mainstream comic writer. *Sandman Mystery Theatre* requires a lot more research than your typical superhero book, but that's all right with me, because I'm big on that kind of thing."

Seagle, seemingly forever pursuing human contact, claims *SMT* has helped him with the opposite sex. "So far, writing *Sandman Mystery Theatre* has been a turn-on for the women," he laughs. "They tend to like the fact that the book is chockfull of misogyny and violence. I get a lot of action with *Sandman Mystery Theatre*. I also get a lot of slaps. But one thing makes me feel good: *Sandman Mystery Theatre* is the book that my mom likes."

paul JENKINS

Connecticut-based Paul Jenkins describes himself as "The guy writing *Hellblazer* that nobody knows." Having a subtle self-disparaging wit and nearly eight years of editing and writing behind him, Jenkins was at the end of the line when they were passing out luck.

"Every time my stuff was about to come out, I would fall victim to one of those hard-luck stories that always happen and that nobody believes," says the author of various stumbling blocks in his odyssey to get his own personal creation, *Construct*, out to the masses. "I'm beginning to feel like the Black Mariah of the comic book industry. If I'm doing *Hellblazer*, you can bet DC is on its way out," he says, collapsing in laughter.

Hopefully, Jenkins and Vertigo will be around long enough for the writer to consummate some plans he has for the popular title. "I'm trying to get the book to a point where previous continuity has been tied up. I will be resolving some issues and giving the character more of a blank slate so we can move onto some more relevant, rather than realistic, issues and introduce certain elements of magic."

Jenkins, born in London and raised "around earth mounds and old Roman roads," grew up amid the pages of Batman and Superman comics, "and wishing I could be an American kid." Boarding school, admittingly, failed to shape him into a doctor or lawyer, and he gravitated toward music and writing "when I saw I was probably going to be the world's worst actor. I couldn't even *cry* on cue."

While touring with a band in the States, Jenkins found a behind-the-scenes gig at the Mass.-based Mirage Studios to his liking and cracked the writing game with a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle story. In the years that followed, he moved from one comic book job to another, eating more dung than steak, but persisting. A chance encounter with Vertigo editor Lou Stathis at last year's San Diego Comic Con led to an audition for *Hellblazer* and the eventual gig.

"Taking over an established title in an already-established universe is good if you're allowed the freedom to explore. I've pretty much got free reign to do whatever I like. Within reason, of course. I kind of feel like I deserve *Hellblazer* because, all ego aside, I feel like I'm good enough to do it."

But should Jenkins' ego ever threaten to get the better of him, he need only look to his immediate relationships for something to bring him back to reality. His girlfriend does not read comics. "I also have a foster child whose problems in his first five years of life are 50 times worse than anything I've ever been through.

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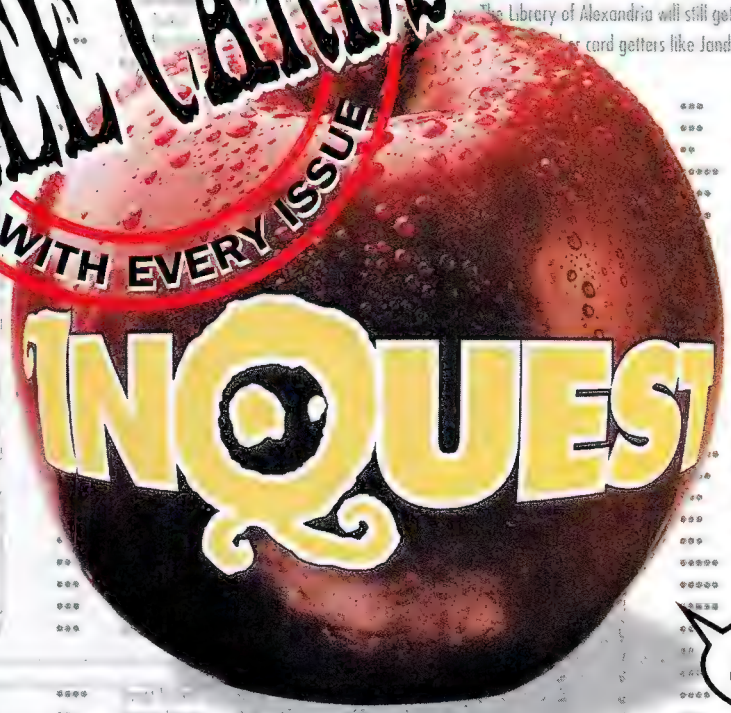

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Comparing his hardships to my farting around with people in comics is no comparison."

A hard-boiled comic book writer subletting part of his life for a foster child? In a sense, it does not compute, and Jenkins is well aware of that. "It's going to be shocking that I'm not the brutal, sadistic, sarcastic person that people who read *Hellblazer* think I am. The real shock is going to be [finding] out that I'm a humanitarian."

mark MILLAR

Normally, Mark Millar does not have a vicious bone in his mild-mannered Scottish body. But put this comic book scribe in front of his current Vertigo assignment, *Swamp Thing*, and this comic book Dr. Jekyll rages into the guise of Mr. Hyde.

"Hopefully, I'm bringing sleaze and disgust back into comic book writing," chuckles Millar whose accent is thicker than the spiel of a carnival barker. "I just have this perverse writer's mind."

And it is a perversity that has not only made Millar the psychological mirror image of writer Alan Moore's work on *Swamp Thing* but an up-and-comer in comic book horror, with that sly European wink. "My style is obviously different from title to title, but my attitude has always been that horror and humor are elements that have always worked brilliantly together. If you do a story that is page after page of horror, than you get kind of desensitized to it. My approach to *Swamp Thing* has been to try and start with something horrible, then lighten the atmosphere a little bit, and then have something just horrible happen next. That's the way I see my doing *Swamp Thing*, as long as I'm on the book, with the only change being to pump up the elements of horror and humor even more than before."

Millar's life script literally reads like a long-lost episode of *Twin Peaks*. "I was born in a monastery in Scotland because the hospitals were on strike at the time. So there I was, among the nuns and all manner of strange things."

Millar's comic book tastes growing up were light on horror and big on superheroes, until Moore's *Swamp Thing* reversed his preference. Until, that is, he gave up on comics altogether. "I stopped reading comic books because I was studying to be a priest," he laughs. "But I gave that up when I discovered girls. Girls and the priesthood definitely don't mix. Then I was going to be a psychiatrist, but my older brother had been doing that and he advised me not to do it because it was rubbish."

Millar took a fly at journalism and, in the process, became acquainted with comic book writer Grant Morrison, got along well with him and decided that "actually getting paid to do something associated with comic books would be a great way to make a living." Millar's first pro sale was a horror title that long ago faded from memory for a black-and-white independent, Trident Comics. "I only got a couple of quid for the job but I got my foot in the door. Then Grant Morrison and I approached *2000 A.D.* during a slow period, and offered to take over the book and create some new characters. After that, DC called and offered me *Swamp Thing*."

Millar, who is quick to name *Swamp Thing* as his proudest achievement to date, turns philosophical when it comes to describing the current state of comic book writing. "Writers have been trying too hard of late, and I don't think that's a good thing. It's like every fight between a superhero and a villain has to involve somebody quoting poetry. It's all become too symbolic at the expense of the action and the character. Hopefully we'll start getting away from that."

The writer, who claims he has at least "another year and a half on *Swamp Thing*," is currently revving up to do a new mystery DC superhero book, Marvel's *Skrull Kill Krew* with Morrison and hints at some upcoming shots at Marvel titles which he is keeping close to his vest. "Yeah, I'm keeping busy. I've probably got too much going on. But that's OK, because I enjoy it. It's work, but it isn't work." ☆

Marc Shapiro, who went behind the scenes of the Spidey cartoon last issue, has a bad case of vertigo. He broke six ribs when he went all woozy and fell off the World Trade Center.

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CONTEST

Extreme Studios Presents:

The Prophet prophet Contest

TAKE IT EASY, KID!

JOHN PROPHET is coming back! In August, those cool guys at Extreme Studios are letting Prophet run free to create all sorts of new havoc. To celebrate the new *Prophet* #1, they want to give all you prophet types a chance to win some neat prizes.

"Prophet prophet?"

HOW TO PLAY

Got psychic powers? Predict anything useful like winning lottery numbers or if the milk is sour before you drink it? Well, you won't need any skills fancier than that for this contest. All you have to do is answer three simple questions about Prophet, one each from his past, present and future (See? You get to be a prophet yourself!). If we pick your name from the correct entries, wham!—you're a winner!

HERE GOES:

Past: In what comic did Prophet first appear?

Present: What is the code name of the joint American-Japanese moon landing expedition in *Prophet* (vol. 2) #1?

Future: What's the meaning of the term "Silver Fox"? (see Prophet #2)

This contest is sponsored by those great dancers at **Extreme Studios**.

PRIZES

Grand Prize (1): One winner, randomly selected from all correct entries, will get a spiffy page of original art from the new *Prophet* #1!

First Prize (10): Ten winners will get a copy of the new *Prophet* #1 signed by writer Chuck Dixon and artist Stephen Platt, plus a special Boris Vallejo cover edition of *Prophet* #1!

Fill this sucker out, put it an envelope and send it to:

Prophet prophet Contest
c/o Wizard Press
PO Box 118
Congers, NY 10920-0118

ENTRIES DUE BY SEPTEMBER 29, 1995!

OFFICIAL PROPHET PROPHET FORM

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Past Present Future

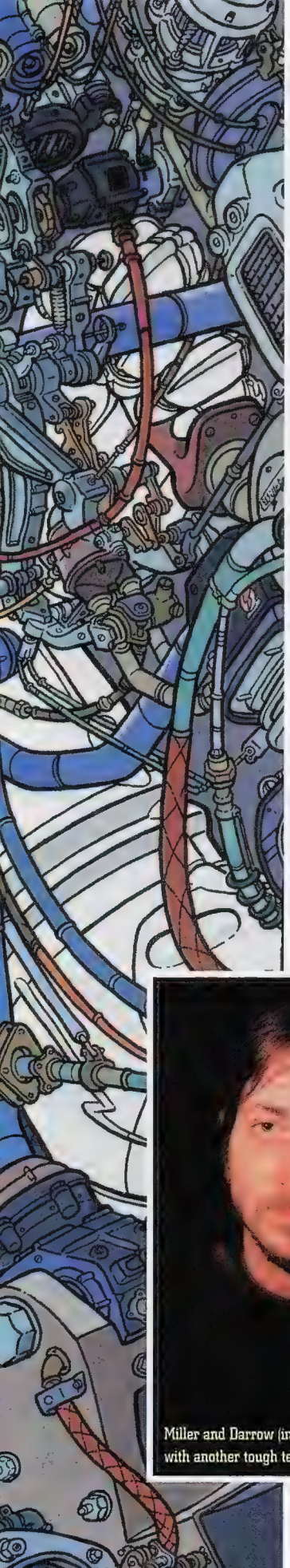
LEGAL STUFF 'N' STUFF

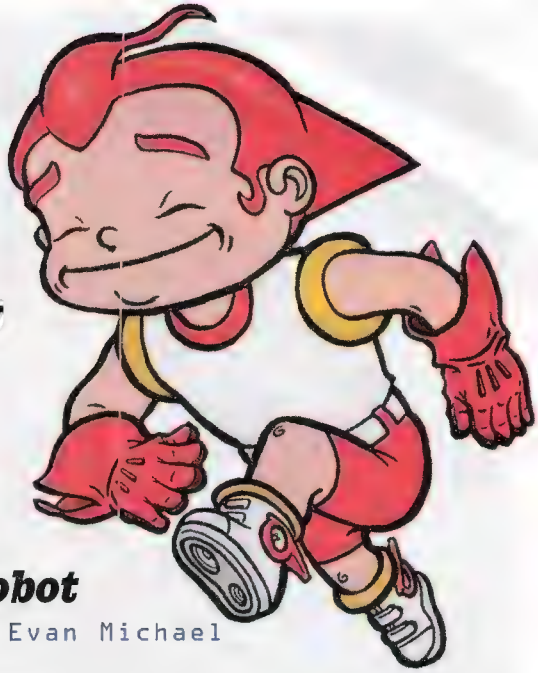
No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Extreme Studios, their immediate families and morning-drive radio disc jockeys. You guys just aren't funny. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5 inch index card with the answers to the three questions. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: Prophet prophet Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the name of contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. You keep your eyes on the road, your hands upon the wheel. All entries must be received at contest headquarters by September 29, 1995. Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected by random drawing among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press. Drawing will take place on October 15, 1995.

For a list of winners, available after October 15, 1995, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Prophet prophet Contest Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Prophet & Kirby ™ & © Rob Liefeld

The Toughest Team in Comics





Frank Miller and Geof Darrow tell tales of near-death and destruction, and talk about *The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot*

by Paul J. Grant and Evan Michael

Frank Miller and Geof Darrow's collaborative career together has spanned five years, two titles—namely *Hard Boiled* and *The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot*—and one near-death experience.

"Geof Darrow and I almost died together in his 1959 Metro," reminisces Miller, the writer of *The Big Guy and Rusty*, laughing about the fateful summer day two years ago.

"The Metro is a tiny, tiny little car that looks like a candy bar. I'm six-foot-three, and Geof's six-six, so picture the two of us packed into a brightly colored little lunchbox, heading down the hill toward Hollywood Boulevard when the brakes completely fail. Geof swerved, avoiding parked cars, and we sailed into the Boulevard, where a truck hit us so hard the car was kicked into the air. It spun onto its side, and as we were spinning on our side, Geof looked down and saw my head silhouetted against sparks flying from the pavement, and all I said was, 'This is bad.' It fell back onto its wheels and came to a stop.

"Geof and I were essentially unhurt. So I figured it was definitely a *Hard Boiled* moment, and we could now declare ourselves the toughest team in comics."

Since co-founding the Legend imprint in 1993, along with Art Adams, John Byrne, Paul Chadwick, Dave Gibbons and Mike Mignola (later bolstered by Mike Allred), the two have been preparing their latest project, *The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot*, a two-issue mini-series published by Dark Horse Comics beginning in late July.

"It's a very different project," says Miller, a 17-year veteran who has both writing and artistic credits which include Marvel Comics' acclaimed *Daredevil*, DC Comics' *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, and a handful of *Sin City* mini-series for Dark Horse. "This one's intended for a younger audience. Both of us felt we went as far in *Hard Boiled* as anybody was likely to go for some time in terms of the carnage, and even though this one's got big monsters and lots of destruction, it's going to be a much more straightforward hero comic."

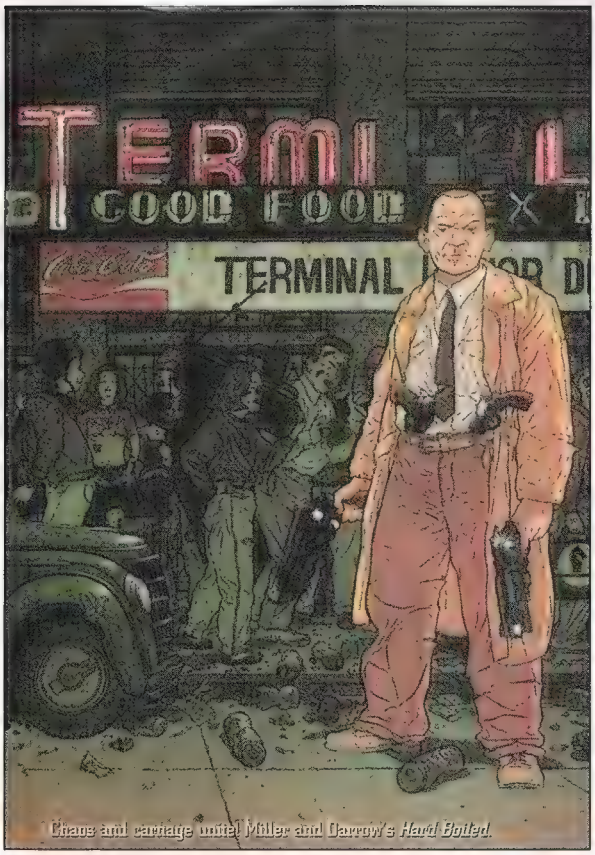
Darrow, *Big Guy*'s artist, burst onto the mainstream comics scene by drawing Dark Horse's *Hard Boiled* three-issue mini-series in 1990 with Miller writing, which combined extreme carnage and a density of design that puts *Where's Waldo?* to shame.

The artist hastens to point out that the new series won't be too different. "If people think it's going to be a guy running around in a field of daisies, well...there's not much blood and guts, but for my money, there's more action in *The Big Guy* than there is in *Hard Boiled*. The second issue is just out-and-out, non-stop action, Jack Kirby kind of monster fights."

So who are The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot?

Miller and Darrow (inset) shift into high gear with another tough team: The Big Guy (left) and Rusty (at top).

All artwork and characters ™ & © Frank Miller and Geof Darrow. Photo by J. Schuyler.



Chaos and carnage unfold Miller and Darrow's *Hard Boiled*.

"Rusty is the national hero of Japan and he's sent to fight this menace," Darrow says. "The story takes place in Tokyo, and there's this giant monster destroying everything in sight and creating an army of monsters. Rusty doesn't do so well, so they finally have to call on the American government, whose ultimate weapon is The Big Guy, who's not a robot but just a guy in a suit. He comes, he wipes everything out, and he leaves."

Besides toning down the violence, Darrow and Miller used a "new" approach with *The Big Guy*. "We worked a little different this time, in that we sort of did it like we assumed [artist and writer team Jack] Kirby and Stan Lee worked [in the early days of Marvel Comics]. We just sort of came up with a basic idea, and then I went and drew it, and then Frank came back and scripted over the art. For Frank, it was probably a lot more difficult, because I'm real secretive and there would be literally months where he had no idea what I was doing. He basically didn't see it until it was finished."

And, if such a thing is possible, Darrow promises that *The Big Guy*, which comes in a large-sized format, will be even more complex artwise than *Hard Boiled*, since it's set in one of the world's most crowded cities. "If you've ever been in Tokyo, it's like three New York Cities in the same space."

There are plans for future tales of The Big Guy and Rusty, including a second mini-series which pits our heroes against a villain "as evil as there's ever been," says Miller. The villain, an augmented human, will allow Darrow a freedom he normally doesn't have. "I'll finally get to draw a character that will be facing somebody his own size. It's not that easy drawing a giant monster, because you're kind of limited. You can't do that sort of toe-to-toe, fist-fighting kind of thing. The scale is so different."

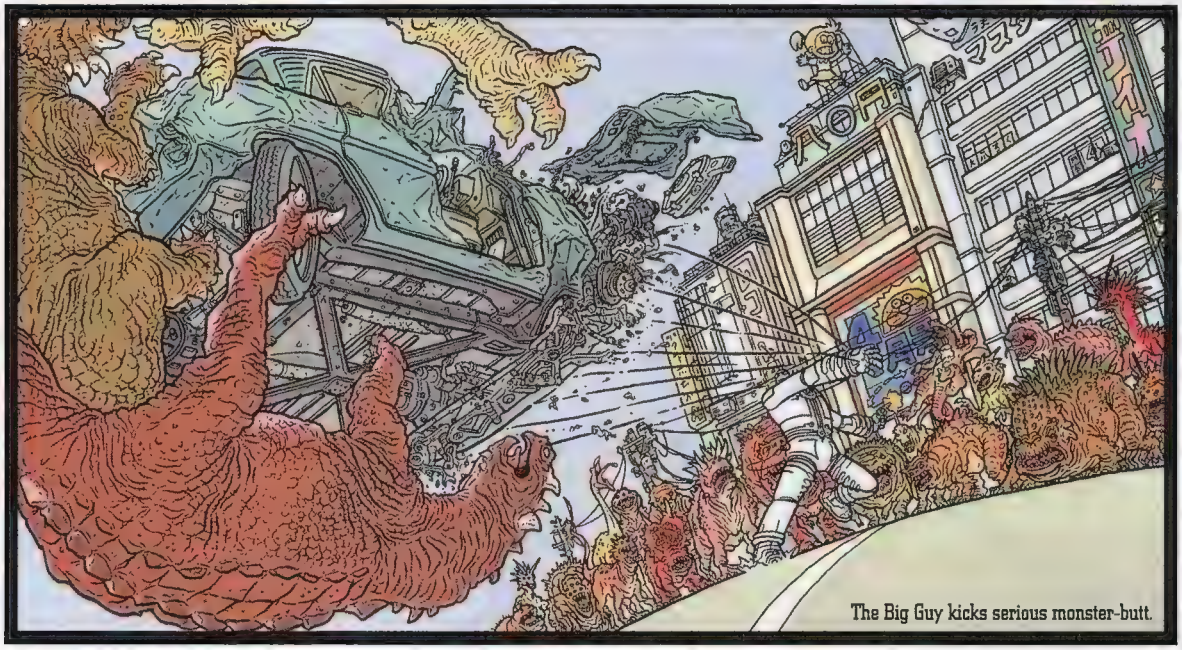
As for when the next *Big Guy* mini-series will hit the stands, Darrow notes, "For once, I can actually say I don't have the script, so I can't tell you."

Other future projects for Darrow include a king-size *Big Guy* book which will be printed in original art-size (11- by 17-inches), and a possible follow-up to *Hard Boiled*. "Frank says he has an idea for one—something to do with an earthquake." Another project under discussion includes a jam by fellow Legend creators, featuring a big team-up with Mignola's Hellboy, Allred's Madman, Adams' Monkeyman, and The Big Guy fighting Nazis on the moon, with Darrow handling the art.

And if you're looking for more tales from Miller, look for another one-shot starring Martha Washington before year's end, as well as the *Martha Washington Saves the World* mini-series (both drawn by Dave Gibbons), tentatively scheduled for early '96 from Dark Horse. He's also working on another *Sin City* project slated for November.

For now, however, you'll have to be content with the highly detailed adventures of The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot. As Darrow puts it best, "It's something everybody can enjoy. It's not a kiddie, sort of 'Sugar and Spike' or Harvey Comics type of thing. It's just a good comic that we hope is sort of in the tradition of Lee and Kirby. It's action-packed. Give it a chance." ☆

Paul J. Grant, whose interview with John Romita Jr. can be found in Wizard *#48, likes nothing better than a nice hard-boiled egg. Mmm...nummy. Evan Michael, on the other hand, looks like a hard-boiled egg.*


The Big Guy kicks serious monster-butt.

DRESSING UP AS THE NEW GREEN GOBLIN COULD GET YOU THROWN IN THE LOONEY BIN. THEN AGAIN, IT COULD WIN YOU A SET OF SPIDER-MAN TOYS!

Get crazy for the August premiere of the new Green Goblin's monthly comic by photographing yourself in your best Goblin get-up (Goblin Glider and non-explosive Pumpkin Bombs are optional)! If your insane impersonation of the new Goblin is the most bewitching, you could win these monster prizes:

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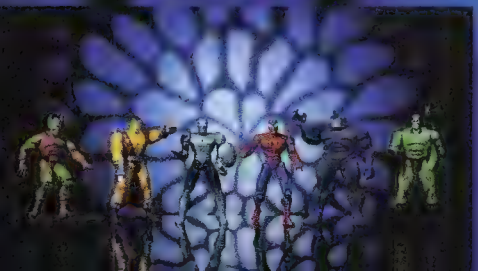
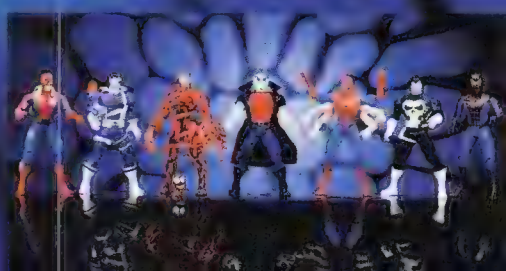
Back, ye demons! Make way for the legal copy!
All entries must be received by Sept. 29th, 1995. Limit one entry per envelope. No purchase necessary. Print your name, age, address, city, state, zip code and your telephone number with area code on the official entry form, or a 3" x 5" index card and attach the form or card to the back of your picture. Contest open to US residents only, except employees and their families of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, WIZARD PRESS, TOY BIZ, INC., their affiliates, subsidiaries, and their advertising and promotional agencies are not eligible. All entrants grant to the sponsors permission to use their name and likeness in advertising and promotion for the contest. By entering the contest, each entrant acknowledges and agrees that his/her entries and all rights of copyright contained therein shall be automatically and immediately assigned to Marvel and shall become the sole and exclusive property of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. and will not be returned. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. Winners will be decided on or about October 13, 1995 and will be notified by telephone and/or mail. Prizes are not redeemable for cash or substitutable for any other item by winners. Marvel reserves the right to substitute a prize of like or greater value for any prize, for any reason. The prize will be awarded in the name of the contest winners and is not transferable. To receive a prize, winners may be required to execute a release of prize liability/prize acceptance form. One prize per person. Offer void where prohibited by law. MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, WIZARD PRESS, and TOY BIZ, INC. are not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Winners will be selected by the staff of Marvel Comics from finalists selected by the Wizard staff based on quality and originality. Winners List available by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to "Winners List - Green Goblin Contest", c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. Winners shall be responsible for all applicable taxes. Void where prohibited by law. Contest sponsored by MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC., WIZARD PRESS, and TOY BIZ, INC. TM & © 1995 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved.





TOYING around • around • around • aroun

WITH SEAN AUNE

WARNER BROS. TOY LINE COMING

Warner Brothers Consumer Products, a division of Warner Brothers Communications—which also owns DC Comics—has announced that it has formed an all-new toy manufacturing division called Warner Brothers Toys. WBT is dedicated to the development of new and existing Warner Brothers television, animated and theatrical licenses.

At the time of this writing, no projects had yet been named. All that is known is that some lines are already in the works, and they will be coming along sometime in the near future. Is this a possible answer to the long-rumored Superman toy line? No one at WBT or DC Comics is talking. Speculated to be produced by Kenner Toys, sources at Kenner have said that there are no plans for this series. Of course, the formation of WBT would also make you wonder if there might ever be another line like Kenner's famous "Super Powers" line of the mid-1980's. At this time, it is anyone's guess, and any lines we have mentioned here are simply speculation at the moment.

What is definite is that WBT will handle all Warner Bros. characters, as well as other licensed ones. Sources have said that there are already teams of developers out looking for new products for WBT to work on and develop. We'll keep you posted as to the comings and goings of this fledgling company over the next few months. You should understand that this may take a while, due to the age of the company and the fact that it has to get everything settled into place.

Batman Update

As with any toy line, Kenner's *Batman Forever* line has some variations in it. First up, the Transforming Dick Grayson (which comes with snap-on armor) wears a color-change mask. In the first shipment of figures, this area will be painted black, but in later shipments it will be painted white to give the eyes more definition.

Blast Cape Batman has two deflectors which show 1/2 yellow and 1/2 black in the first shipments. In the later shipments, the ratio of paint will change to 3/4 yellow and 1/4 black. The first version will have a very limited production run. There will also be a change in packaging for this figure. The first version will show the cape fabric covering the bonus yellow shield attached to the fabric, while the second shipments will show the cape clipped over to the side, so the yellow shield is on top of the fabric and the cape is on the bottom (allowing you to see the shield through the packaging).

The final figure to undergo changes will be the Night Hunter Batman. The claw accessories have been moved from the top of the blister to the bottom of the blister. There will be a small quantity of product shipped with the first variation.

Compared to any example of past Batman figure packaging, the new packaging is the most eye-catching. Hopefully, this will breathe some new life into

From Kenner's *Batman Forever* toy line, the Batmobile (left) and Sonar Sensor Batman

Batman and Batmobile™ & © DC Comics. Background Art™ & © Eclipse.

***Gargoyles* figures are here! Left to right, front row: Demona and Brooklyn. Back row: Hudson, Goliath, Broadway and Lexington.**

a toy line that seems to have been somewhat sterile up until recently.

Hercules Unleashed!

Toy Biz has announced a new toy line based on the syndicated MCA television series *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*. The product line will consist of 5-inch action figures, 6-inch monsters and a 10-inch deluxe figure.

The 5-inch division of the line will include seven figures. Hercules I will come with a cloth vest, snap-on gauntlets, a sword and a mace. Hercules II will be equipped with a cloth vest, snap-on gauntlets, a bow and two arrows. Hercules III has a giant blade-swinging backpack. Hercules' companion Iolas will come with a double-catapult backpack. Xena, the warrior princess, will be equipped with two swords and a shield with pop-out action blades. The Minotaur will trap his enemies with his Immobilizing Sludge Platters. Ares, the God of War, will be menacing Hercules and his friends with his snap-on bladed weapons.

The monsters will be standing slightly taller than the action figures; they measure in at six inches. Each of these figures will have soft bodies, with bendable limbs like those found on bend-ems. The Hydra will have three poseable heads. Zerbrus will be man's best friend three times over, as the dog with three heads. The final monster in the line-up has not appeared on the television series as of yet. Her name is Echidna, and she is considered the mother of all monsters. She will have six arms with bendable movement, her legs will appear like those of a snake, and her face will also have a reptilian appearance.

The final toy in the line will be a 10-inch Hercules deluxe figure that will come with a sword, an over-the-shoulder sheath, a bow and arrows. All of the figures mentioned here are due out before Christmas, and a second series of figures is expected to be shown at Toy Fair 1996 (which'll be here before you know it!).

Assorted Stuff

Applause, a company famous for its PVCs and large vinyl figures, is releasing a new line based on the popular Disney animated series *Gargoyles*. These figures will vary in size from six to nine inches. The characters currently scheduled for release are Demona, Goliath, Broadway, Lexington, Brooklyn and Hudson.

These figures will have some moveable limbs, but for the most part they are in stationary poses. You can liken these to the 10-inch figures being released by other companies. They are very highly detailed and beautifully sculpted.

If you enjoy Applause's PVCs, there will also be a line of *Gargoyles* figurines. The currently scheduled characters are David Xanatos, Demona, Goliath, Lexington, Broadway, Brooklyn, Bronx and Elisa Maza.

Toying Around has received a few letters asking what it means at the end of every column when I say, "Until then, see you in aisle 7C!" For those of you who frequent Toys 'R' Us, you will recognize that this is the aisle where you can most commonly find the action figures, such as Batman, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, G.I. Joe and many more. It's often an amazing place to be. Since this column is dedicated to "news you can use" regarding these types of items, it just seems to fit.

Be here next month for the huge 50th issue celebration. Until then, see you...in aisle 7C!

When not wrasslin' gators in the Louisiana Bayou, Sean Aune enjoys Pez.

GARGOYLES ™ & © Buena Vista Pictures Distribution Inc.

BACK FOR
THE ATTACK!

So there you are one day, walking home through the sewers, when you suddenly stumble across Venom battling Gambit. You freak. You panic. You weren't expecting this. What the bloody bejeezus are you gonna do?

That's easy. You fill out the coupon in the middle of this spread and drop it in the envelope with three bucks. Because you just realized that Venom vs. Gambit is the second in a series of three *Wizard* exclusive Fleer OverPower Metal Prints!

Each Metal Print is a jumbo-sized 6 1/2"-by-10" worth of funky Marvel art done up in Fleer's Marvel Metal process. And yes, True Believer, you read that right—this baby is a *Wizard* exclusive, not available anywhere else. Don't miss out! Order today and get yours before time runs out!

And stay out of the sewers, huh?
You'll catch your death of cold.

Stuff our lawyers make us print

No reproductions of this coupon will be accepted. This coupon must be sent in the accompanying envelope, one coupon per card. You may put additional coupons in the same envelope. Each request must be accompanied by $3 shipping and handling, $4 in Canada and $6 for other foreign countries. All payment must be in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank. Requests are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Offer good only while supply lasts. Please allow 12 to 16 weeks for delivery. Changes of address will not be forwarded unless Wizard Press is notified in writing by September 29, 1995.

THIS OFFER EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 29, 1995.

MARVEL OVERPOWER LOGOTYPE™ & © Fleer Corp.

HOMEMADE HEROES

Believe it or not, the following figures were made out of plain old, ordinary figures, and every one of the talented creators will get a *Superboy* #0 signed by Tom Grummett and an *X-Force* #38 signed by Fabian Nicieza. The two runners-up also get a set of the 10-inch Toy Biz Wolverine, Sabretooth and Cyclops figures, an *Evil Ernie: Revenge!* #1 signed by Brian Pulido and Steven Hughes and a *Captain America* #425 signed by Mark Gruenwald and Dave Hoover. The Grand Prize winner comes away with all that stuff plus **a limited-edition Wolverine porcelain figure by Randy Bowen** (thanks heaps, Randy!). Congrats to everyone!

THE ARENA FOR FAN-MADE ACTION FIGURES.

THIS X-MAS SEASON, LOOK FOR THE NEW ANTI-GRAVITY PONY-TAIL PROPHET AT A STORE NEAR YOU!

Ben Hollis of Cortland, Ohio, made this Extreme character from a Toy Biz Shatterstar head and a Toy Biz Omega Red body. Good going, Ben!

"CANCER SCHMANCER, I LIKE SILICONE."

Made from some company's Ms. Flair figure "with mounds of putty," Paul Herwick of Climax, N.Y., did a pretty bang-up job.

"EVEN WITHOUT GENI-TALS, I AM CONTENT."

Paul Chadwick's character was perfectly re-created by Francis Ovellette of Quebec, Canada. We have no friggin' clue what he was made from, but he looks cool anyway.

"PLEASE HELP US! OUR BLACK-AND-YELLOW TEAM-MATE IS JUST A PIECE OF PAPER!"

Brad McCurry of Shelby, N.C., made (from left to right) the Negative Man from a Kenner Super Powers Flash, Elasti-Girl from a Tyco *Cadillacs & Dinosaurs* Hannah Dundee, Robotman from a Super Powers Martian Manhunter, and Beast Boy from a Mattel Secret Wars Wolverine.

"LAQUITA HAD A BIG OLE BUTT!"

Crafted by Charles Odion of Yorba Linda, Calif., Fone Bone here was made from a Kermit the Frog body.

DOOM PATROL ™ & © DC Comics. PROPHET ™ & © Rob Liefeld Inc. FAIRCHILD ™ & © Aegis Entertainment Inc. CONCRETE ™ & © Paul Chadwick. BONE ™ & © Jeff Smith. Background Art ™ & © Eclipse.

GOLDEN AGE SANDMAN

"HAFF! GIF MEF YOFF MURFREE! FEEP! FEEP!"
The base of this fine figure was a Playmates Jean-Luc Picard "Dixon Hill" figure. Then Jeffrey Hunt of S. Berwick, Maine, added a Toy Biz Punisher overcoat, as well as a gas mask and gun made from clay and putty.

SECOND PRIZE winner

VAMPIRELLA

"WHAT?!? I'M THE *ORIGINAL*?!? WHOO-HOO! HEY, *WIZARD*, UP YOURS!!"
Made from a Todd Toys Spawn figure, this clone-turned-Real-McCoy was made by Jason Leinman of Morganville, N.J. Congratulations!

"GEE, I WONDER HOW MUCH BLOOD KEN'S GOT IN HIM..."
This is whatcha get when you mix a Mattel Barbie doll with homemade clothing, courtesy of the talented Troy Younger, of Commerce City, Colo.

SECOND PRIZE winner

SCARLET SPIDER

ARCHANGEL

GRAND PRIZE winner

"Y'KNOW, I BET I CAN MAKE A PRETTY MEAN BAKED POTATO WITH THESE BABIES!"
Can you believe this thing actually started out as a Toy Biz Sunspot figure? Cape Coral, Fla., resident Richard Vilardi took some paint, foil sheets and hanger wire, and *voilà*!

hey!

If you're interested in entering the homemade figure contest, send well-lit, clear, color photographs (No Polaroids!) to:

Homemade Heroes
c/o Wizard Press
PO Box 118
Congers, NY 10920-0118

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POWER UP!

E3 LEFTOVERS ...MMM NUMMY

By Steve Brown

Here at *Wizard* we've been beating the sweltering heat by playing some cool new video game releases. Hats off to Sega and Acclaim this month for providing us with four above average games. But before we get into the nitty gritty review portion of this month's column, we're going to show you a few more games that were previewed at the E3 Electronic Expo in May.

1) If you haven't yet tasted the **Magic: The Gathering** phenomenon, now's your chance! Due out late this summer, MicroProse's adaptation of the hottest game since *Dungeons & Dragons* features over a 1000 cards from *Magic*'s basic set and the first four expansion sets—*Arabian Nights*, *Antiquities*, *Legends* and *The Dark*. If you're already a *Magic* junkie, you'll still be fascinated by the super VGA collection of cards and the ability to build any deck you want, even with cards that you don't own!

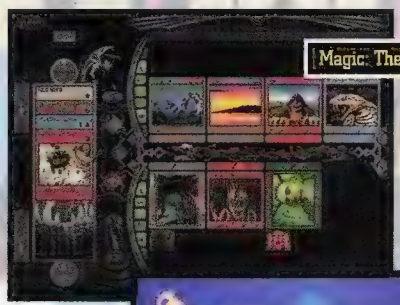
Unfortunately, for all you Mac-lovers, the *Magic* computer game will only be IBM compatible, and that's only if you have a CD-ROM drive and a 386 or faster computer (not to mention, *lots* of hard drive space). You will, however, be able to play it at home as a stand-alone game or as an interactive, multiplayer version, exclusive to the GEnie online service.

2) **Primal Rage**, a head-to-head fighting game with an original look that features seven fantasy, pre-historic characters in a battle for supremacy, is coming to a home system near you. On August 25, Time Warner will release the Sega Genesis, Game Gear, SNES, Game Boy and PC CD-ROM versions. November 14 is the date for the second wave of software on new gaming systems including the Sega Saturn, Sega 32X, 3DO, Sony Playstation and Atari Jaguar, as well as the Macintosh CD-ROM.

3) Traditional video game design is transformed with breakthrough gameplay when Disney Interactive unleashes its new action-adventure video game, **Pocahontas**. The first game title in history in which the objective is to *prevent* rather than wage war, *Pocahontas* presents the compelling story of the proud and determined Native American and her exciting encounters with the famed British soldier, Captain John Smith. *Pocahontas: The Video Game*, featuring a new gameplay saving feature, will be available for SNES and Sega Genesis in November, 1995.

4) Playmates revealed **Earthworm Jim 2**, an even wackier game with more pronounced graphics than the original 16-bit hit. *Jim 2*, created for Playmates by Shiny Entertainment for SNES and Sega Genesis systems, sends the galaxy's first worm-turned-superhero where no man has dared to travel before. Earthworm Jim is caught in a variety of interesting predicaments, passing through many intriguing levels. Shiny has also improved the graphics for *Jim 2*. Utilizing a new and improved version of Shiny's trademarked Animotion—Animotion II—Jim attains an animated motion picture quality and feel not only in attention to detail, but in fluidity of motion as well. *Earthworm Jim 2* is scheduled to hit retail shelves in October. In September, the Earthworm Jim license roars to life with an action figure line from Playmates and a weekly cartoon series launching the Saturday morning WB Kids Network. Also due this fall are an Earthworm Jim comic book, trading cards and stickers.

5) **Garfield: Caught in the Act** brings America's favorite feline to the Sega Genesis and Game Gear this October in all his wise-cracking glory with incredibly true graphics created by actual Garfield illustrators. In this all-new adventure, a rude awakening causes Garfield and


Magic: The Gathering

Earthworm Jim 2

Earthworm Jim 2

seaQuest DSV

Odie to break Jon's television. In their feeble attempt to fix it before Jon gets home, they forget to use some of the parts. These leftover parts become the dastardly "Glitch," who transports Garfield inside the TV and takes him through feline versions of midnight movie classics such as "Cat Cave 3,000,000 B.C. (Before Cartoons)," "Catsablanca" and "The Curse of CleoFatra." Gamers must help Garfield get through all these wacky flicks.

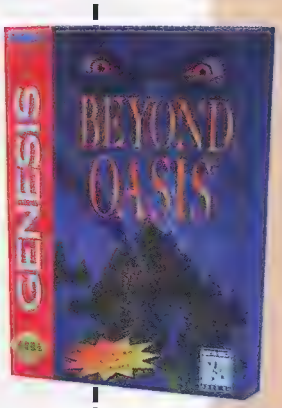
6) Enter the depths of adventure with **seaQuest DSV** on Sega Genesis, SNES and Game Boy. T•HQ has taken spectacular footage from the underwater world of *seaQuest DSV* to transport players into a futuristic game of excitement and adventure. Pilot the fastest, most powerful submarine and various underwater vehicles in six missions to stop renegade pirate organizations. The game is already available in stores, so get diving! ☆

Steve Brown auditioned for a part in the Justice League but forgot to bring his athletic supporter, so he didn't quite make the cut.

Reviews

BEYOND OASIS

(by Sega for Genesis)



If there is one genre that the Genesis has always lagged behind the SNES in, it's Role Playing Games (RPGs). *Beyond Oasis* is an overhead, quest-type adventure, where as Ali you call on the powers of the four wild elemental spirits to battle the evil minions of Agito. Basically, it is a graphically souped up *Legend of Zelda*, with a larger assortment of monsters and greater emphasis on fighting. It is not a true RPG, in that your attributes do not increase as your experience does. *Beyond Oasis* is a huge 24 MEG game with a great battery backup, but it is very pricey...try $60 to $70! And four hours later I don't think I got even a quarter of the way through it. Keeping in mind the price, I do recommend it wholeheartedly.

PHANTASY STAR IV

(by Sega for Genesis)

This is the fourth installment in a classic series, and unlike *Beyond Oasis*, this is a true RPG. As you explore and kill creatures, your character becomes much more powerful. This game is *very* addicting and I'd have no problem giving it a complete thumbs up, but (this is a very big but)...it costs 90-100 bucks!!! I'm sorry, but no game is worth that kinda dough. The first three *Phantasy Stars* are great games and if you don't have those, try a used copy. The fourth installment really doesn't improve geometrically upon the earlier chapters, but as an RPG it is one of the best and certainly the most involving.

LOONEY TUNES BASKETBALL

(by Sunsoft/ Acclaim for the SNES solid gameplay and sense of humor)

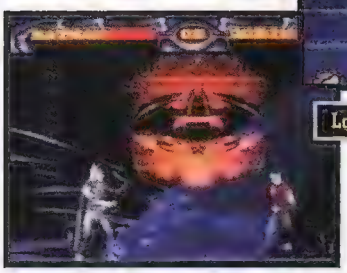
A perfect game for youngsters, it has a multitude of difficulty settings. You pick two Looney Tunes players from: Sylvester, Bugs, Taz, Marvin the Martian, Daffy, Yosemite Sam, Elmer Fudd and, of course, Wile E. Coyote. A la *NBA Jam*, each character has unique strengths and weaknesses, along with his signature move. The niftiest part are the rules—there aren't any! You can change the ball into a cream pie, become invisible or even turn off the lights. One to four players can play and it is a blast. Already it has a large list of special moves, but according to Acclaim there are a ton of hidden secret ones that bring the wacky-meter up. If you're tired of killing and fighting games, this is a must have.

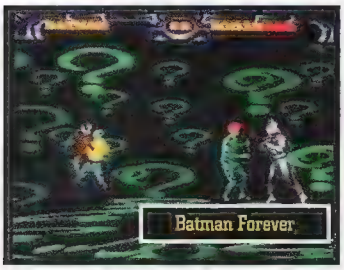
JUSTICE LEAGUE TASK FORCE

(by Acclaim/Sunsoft for Genesis and SNES)

This game has been in development for a long time, and was originally designed to cash in on the now passé *Street Fighter II* craze. To be blunt, as a fighting game, *JLTF* sucks in comparison to *MK II*, or any of the soon to be home versions of *Primal Rage*, *Virtua Fighter* or *Killer Instinct*. But for those of you (like me), who are huge DC Comics fans and have little interest in the nth Street Kombat clone, this game does have many virtues. The character animation is fabulous and the secret moves are fun to pull off. I would consider this average difficulty and a very fun two-player game. It also is available (Sega's version) for under 45 bucks. The cast is great: Superman, Wonder Woman, Flash, Cheetah, Despero, Aquaman, Green Arrow, Batman and the king of bad asses...Darkseid. It's too bad this didn't come out earlier, 'cause it might've had a chance to sell, insuring us plenty more DC video games. ●

Looney Tunes Basketball

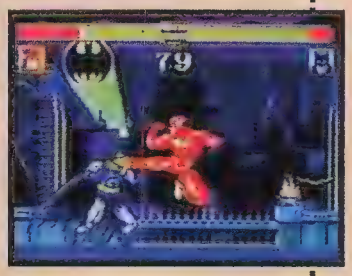




Batman Forever

No real news on the *Batman Forever* game but we thought we'd show another picture or two

Justice League for SNES and Genesis



All artwork, games and characters are ™ & © their respective owners.

COMIC BOOK INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

CBIQ

Wakka, wakka, wakka! It's time once again to fight the system and make good use o' that comic book noggin' of yours! What follows are 25 of the hardest questions ever slapped together by a band of Muppetastic fanboys.

This time around, we're grading you against the latest comic industry rumors. The higher the score, the neater the rumor.

score	rank
0-5	Jim Shooter is really just a guy suit full of ducks, like in that old "Far Side" cartoon.
6-12	*Wizard* is evil. (Hey!)
13-19	Someone out there actually read every issue of *Anima*.
20-24	Valiant Vision linked to Ebola virus.
25	Stan Lee running on the Republican ticket in '96.

1. Who killed Danny Ketch's sister?
A) Johnny Blaze
B) Blade
C) Blackout
D) Really poor sales

2. Which character has not returned from the dead?
A) Captain Mar-Vell
B) Dr. Octopus (well, not yet, anyway)
C) The Wasp
D) Spider-Woman

3. The Fantastic Four's very first adversary was:
A) Doctor Doom.
B) The Hate-Monger.
C) The Mole Man.
D) Tom DeFalco.

4. I'd rather read comics than:
A) Wash my face.
B) Fantasize about that girl in my third period science class. (You know—the one with the sweater.)
C) Read? What's that?
D) Come to think of it, I'd rather read comics than anything.

5. Who among the following is not a Native American comic character?
A) Tish Twelvetrees
B) Ripclaw
C) Wyatt Wingfoot
D) Great Bear

6. To charge up his ring, the Hal Jordan Green Lantern said:
A) "In brightest day, in blackest night, no evil shall escape my sight..."
B) "By the power of Greyskull, I...have...the *power*!"
C) "Thing ring, do your thing!"
D) "Gimme the power to fly, the power to beat, holy sweet bacon, this ring ams neat!"

7. Which character wasn't born on Mars?
A) The Martian Manhunter
B) John Carter, Warlord of Mars
C) Marvin the Martian
D) Marc Wilkofsky (actually, he was only conceived there)

8. Green Arrow never used the:
A) Eight-ball arrow.
B) Boxing Glove arrow.
C) Spam arrow (dubbed "The Sparrow").
D) Tear gas arrow.

9. How did you feel after reading *Amazing Spider-Man* #400, with the death of Aunt May?
A) Disgusted that comic companies are still using death to sell books
B) Happier than a greased-up fanboy in a chromium factory
C) Shocked...because after like 18 billion strokes, heart attacks and collapses, they actually offed the old broad
D) I don't feel anything, because the onslaught of TV and comic violence has numbed my senses

10. What were Bucky's last words before he was blown to itty li'l pieces?
A) "It's gonna blow!"
B) "Cap...I've always...loved you..."
C) "AAAAAARRRRRGGGGGGHHHHHH!!!"
D) "Hmmm, I wonder why all them Nazis are runnin'?"

11. Who bonded the demon Etrigan to Jason Blood?
A) Thrakkorzog
B) Merlin
C) The Devil
D) Demons? In comics? Fredric Wertham was right...

12. Which of the following was one of the Seven Dwarfs?
A) Skanky
B) Scabby
C) Happy
D) Dave

13. *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor* is hosted by:
A) The Crypt Keeper.
B) John Byrne.
C) Rod Serling.
D) Harlan Ellison, you dimwit!

14. Nexus receives his assignments from:
A) The Merk.

Background ™ & © their respective owners

B) Mark Hazzard, the Merc.
C) Ylum.
D) Mike Baron and Steve Rude.

15. What's Gran'ma Ben's favorite pie?
A) Blueberry
B) Apple
C) Cherry
D) 3.142857

16. Who was Elektra's bodyguard when she first met Matt Murdock?
A) Bubba
B) Quantis
C) Athon
D) Big Daddy Cool, but then Elektra kicked him in the head like, seven times, and he quit and went on to become the WWF champion

17. What park was Frank Castle's family murdered in?
A) Central Park
B) Battery Park
C) Washington Square Park
D) Jellystone Park ("Hey, Boo Boo, there's a severed head in da pikanik basket.")

18. The Comedian was killed by:
A) Dr. Manhattan.
B) Rorschach.
C) Rip Taylor. ("It's FUNNY!")
D) Adrian Veidt.

19. Who was the last Green Lantern to face Hal Jordan on his quest for power towards Oa?
A) Boodikka
B) Kilowog
C) Sinestro
D) G'Nort

20. Who did Iron Fist fight in his first issue?
A) Iron Man
B) Sabretooth
C) Power Man
D) 175 midgets armed to the teeth with over-full colostomy bags

21. Which of the following was not a member of the Invaders?
A) Toro
B) Blonde Phantom
C) Union Jack
D) Sub-Mariner

22. In *The Elementals*, who was responsible for releasing the Shadowspear?
A) Chrysalis
B) Captain Cadaver
C) Saker
D) Ambrose

23. Which Continuity Comics title solicited a guest appearance by Spawn that never happened?
A) *Valeria, The She-Bat*
B) *Ms. Mystic*
C) *Armor*
D) Who cares, but knowing McFarlane, he'll probably publish it two years from now, putting it in *Bucky O'Hare* #20 and #21, and confuse the crap out of everybody

24. Which band has songs titled "Ego, The Living Planet" and "Vertigo" on its latest album, *Dopes to Infinity*?
A) Big Head Todd and the Monsters (No, no—that's not the Image crew)
B) Gear Daddies
C) Neil Young and Crazy Horse
D) Monster Magnet

25. What are those knifey-lookin' things that come out of Azrael's wrist gauntlets?
A) Ginsu knives ("But you can't cut a watermelon!")
B) Anti-bad guy puncturing devices
C) "Purificators"
D) Just something to make him look tough ☆

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MISSING LINK

WIN! *Avengers* #16!

Hawkeye, Scarlet Witch and Quicksilver join the team in this one!

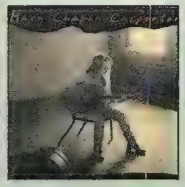
Each month, we list three comic book issues that contain something in common: in content, characters, creators, or the like. Your job is to tell us what that something is.

For example, what do *Uncanny X-Men* #144, *Marvel Team-Up* #122, and *She-Hulk* (vol. 2) #8 all have in common? That's easy: all three feature guest appearances by the Man-Thing.

Get the idea? We'll randomly select an entry out of all the correct ones we receive. The winner of this month's contest will receive a copy of ***Avengers* #16**! Whoa! So good luck, and good sleuthing!

Here are this month's batch of...er, products:

Cable #20



Mary Chapin Carpenter's *Stones in the Road*

Marvels #1

Send all entries to:
Missing Link #49
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064
***Hurry!* All entries must be received by September 30, 1995!**

CONGRATULATIONS to Danny Olsson, from Taylor, MI, the winner of issue #44's Missing Link! He actually read the three issues—*Gen*^{13} (mini-series) #1, *Havok & Wolverine: Meltdown* #1, and *Uncanny X-Men* #155—and figured out that they all contained references to Darth Vader! You have done well, young Jedi!

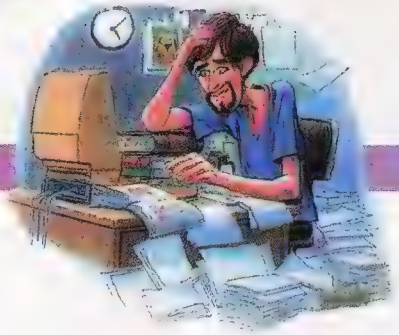
No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families and their rabbits. Print your name, age, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the Missing Link on a three-by-five-inch index card or a standard postcard. Mail each entry to Missing Link #49, c/o Wizard Press, PO Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. Enter as many times as you like. Limit one entry per envelope. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prize is offered. The prize will be awarded in the name of the contest winner and is not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. "There's a record album up there! I'm so confused!" Calm down, bud—we're making it interesting this time. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by September 30, 1995.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winner will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on October 13, 1995, by Wizard Press. All decisions are final.

For the winner's name, available after October 13, 1995, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Missing Link #49 Winner, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064.

ANSWERS

1.C	2.A	3.C	4.D	5.D	6.A	7.B	8.C	9.D
10.A	11.B	12.C	13.D	14.A	15.B	16.C	17.A	18.D
19.C	20.A	21.B	22.C	23.A	24.D	25.D		

PALMER'S PICKS



A Library of Fun

With the price tags on comic books currently sky-rocketing at an unreasonable rate, it is almost impossible to really get your money's worth from a comic. When you buy an issue of Chris Ware's *Acme Novelty Library*, however, you know that your hard-earned cash is well-spent. Aside from the lavish production values and inventive formats of each issue, Ware's critically acclaimed comic contains working cut-out toys, hilarious fake ads and tightly-packed columns of text. But don't let all of these extras fool you; on top of the attractive package, the *Acme Novelty Library* also features pages and pages of delicately drawn and precisely designed comics. Each issue of the *Acme Novelty Library* warrants several re-readings, in order to really absorb everything that goes on in the comic.

This June, Ware began "Jimmy Corrigan—The Smartest Kid on Earth," a new eight-part story featuring one of Ware's most-recognized characters and his search for his estranged father. Ware describes the first part of "Jimmy Corrigan," which is actually the fifth issue in the *Acme Novelty Library*, as "the first chapter of an incredibly long, boring story. I'm sure by the time it's all done there will probably only be a few people who have actually stuck with it."

"Jimmy Corrigan" has been serialized for the past two years in weekly installments for Chicago's *New City* newspaper. "Maybe it reads better in larger chunks, but it seems like a completely foolish endeavor to try to do something so big. I designed the weekly strip so that I was actually doing two pages for the comic. Otherwise I'd be working on it until the turn of the millennium, which I may actually do anyway."

Despite Ware's self-effacing comments, he is definitely an innovative and ground-breaking artist who takes the comics artform to a new level of sophistication and complexity. Ware readily makes use of intricate panel layouts and page designs to experiment with the way the human eye flows through a page. He achieves an expert balance of design and content through his combination of sequential images and text.

Ware understands why comics are an exciting artform open to experimentation. "What makes a comic strip or cartooning unique is that writing and drawing are simultaneous acts that cannot be separated. I don't even think of myself as a writer or an artist, necessarily, except when one begins to pick the process apart. Drawing a picture in a comic strip is, in a sense, writing, so I don't spend more time thinking about the story or the drawing, because to me they're the same thing."

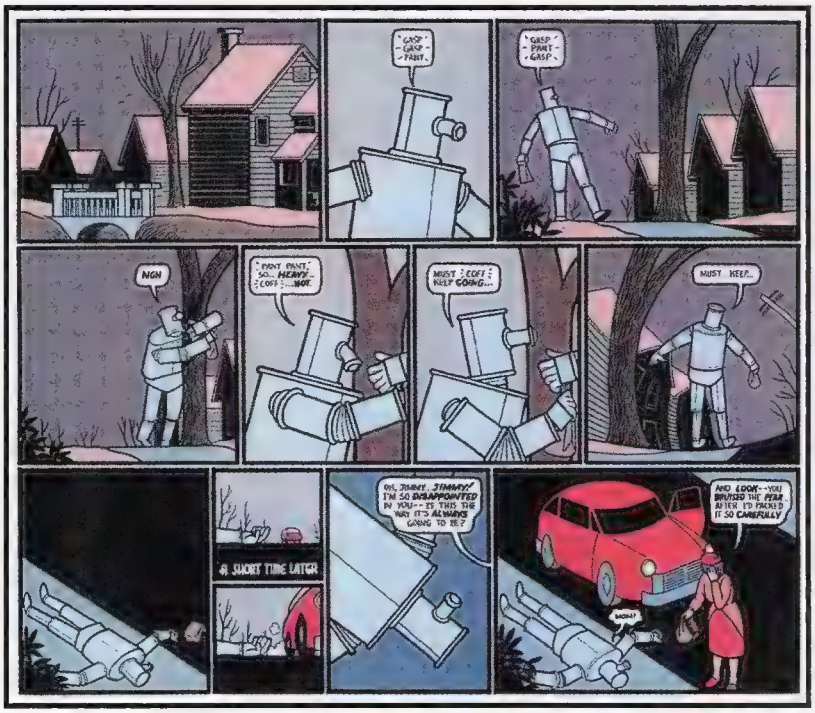
When creating the stories behind his characters, Ware extrapolates from his experiences. "Anything that you write is obviously based on your own experience, to one degree or another. Dostoyevsky hopefully didn't kill an old woman, but he managed to convince the careful reader of the feelings that one might go through [after doing] something like that. The job of any writer is to try to lie effectively, or to try to turn lying into something that's really no longer a lie."

One of the reasons that Ware's work is so fresh is his spontaneous working methods. Unlike other creators who plan their comics ahead of time, Ware works directly on the page. "I go pretty much panel by panel. There might be certain things that I want to emphasize, but I don't do sketches or roughs of every page. There are so many ideas that come up while I'm drawing, that trying to map something out ahead of time sometimes can kill some of those connections."

Ware acknowledges that his comics don't

Chris Ware's critically acclaimed *Acme Novelty Library* contains working cut-out toys, hilarious fake ads and delicately drawn art.

Panels from the "Jimmy Corrigan" story



come out perfect on the first try. "I go back and correct things. Basically, the first draft is whatever appears in the newspapers, but there isn't a whole lot of changing going on. It's mostly tweaking and changing the rhythm and stuff. Comics are so boring to draw, and they take so long that you just have to try to do all sorts of different things to keep yourself interested. If I wrote it all out and just drew from a bunch of little doodles, it would become kind of tiresome after a while."

Ware's weekly deadlines for his newspaper strip also make his work instinctive and inventive. He's been working for *New City* since 1992, and also worked on the college newspaper while at the University of Texas. "I've tried to maintain that weekly deadline just to keep me making stuff, because if I didn't, I'd most likely just be lazy and not do anything."

His newspaper work has taught Ware quite a bit about reproducing artwork. "There were a couple of guys who worked in the camera room [at college] who helped me to understand exactly how a drawing gets from the drawing to the paper, and all the steps in between. That's how I learned to do a lot of manipulations of the negatives, though it's a bit different now, in that a lot of the separations are computer-colored, so I'm slightly more removed. I indicate the colors, and then someone else does the separations."

Working with Fantagraphics Books has given Ware a great amount of control over his work, from the initial idea to the final printed package. "I have more control than probably any artist should actually have. So every mistake that's there is mine. Kim Thompson is supposedly the editor, but he has never told me 'no' yet. He's helped me with some punctuation difficulties, but other than that, he's gone out of his way to make sure every issue is perfect. He's even suggested upgrading paper stocks and getting better printers. I couldn't ask for a better place to get stuff printed." ☆

Tom Palmer Jr. is a painfully shy lad who never leaves the house without his personal bodyguard.

TOP: Jimmy Corrigan in his birthday suit. .almost.
ABOVE: Sparky finds something that will change his life forever. .a rock.

FYI

The *Acme Novelty Library* is published by Fantagraphics Books. The first part of "Jimmy Corrigan" was released in June, and future issues of this 7" x 6" full-color comic will appear on a quarterly basis. If you have trouble finding copies at your favorite comic store, write to Fantagraphics Books, 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115 or call 1-800-657-1100 for a free catalog or subscription information.

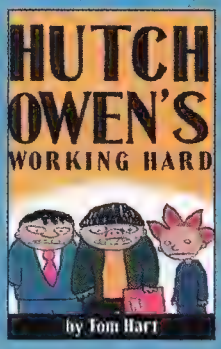
Chris Ware's Recommended Reading: "I always hate doing this sort of thing, because I always think of something later that I left out. Obviously, I read all the usual culprits, like *Eightball*, *Hate*, all those sorts of things. I think lately there's been some great stuff published." Ware says that some of that "great stuff" includes Adrian Tomine's *Optic Nerve*, *The Biologic Show* by Al Columbia, Charles Burns' new book *Black Hole*, Archer Prewitt's *Sof' Boy*, Jason Lutes' *Jar of Fools*, Gary Panter's new comic book *Jimbo*, *Collier's* by David Collier, Joe Matt's *Peepshow*, *Underwater* by Chester Brown and *Palooka-Ville* by Seth.

Tom's Recommended Reading

***A.K.A. Goldfish*:** Brian Michael Bendis' series of interlocking one-shots continues with *A.K.A. Goldfish: Joker*, on sale in August. With so many "crime" comics popping up lately, *A.K.A. Goldfish* is distinguished from the rest by Bendis' sharp dialogue, tight storytelling and crisp, stylized artwork. You can get in touch with Brian at Boom Boom Studios, PO Box 14736, Cleveland, OH 44114, or you can call Caliber Press, *A.K.A. Goldfish*'s publisher, directly at 1-800-346-8940.

***Atomic City Special*:** If you haven't had a chance to pick up Jay Stephens' wonderful *Atomic City Tales*, then you owe it to yourself to try this new one-shot comic. Aside from containing all-new stories, this comic reprints and completes a story originally serialized in *Sputnik* magazine. "Offbeat" doesn't begin to describe the characters that wander around this comic. But the one thing that really makes this a top-notch book is Stephens' accomplished pen and brush work. For more information, write to Black Eye Productions, 338 Kribs Street, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada N3C 3J3, or those of you floating in cyberspace can e-mail them at mvrana@e-world.com.

***New Hat*:** Due to immense stupidity on my part, I forgot to mention Tom Hart's *Hutch Owen's Working Hard* when it first came out a year ago. So now I can beg you to write to Tom at PO Box 95973, Seattle, WA 98145-2973, and ask him to forgive me. You can also make up for my huge oversight by buying Tom's *New Hat*, out in July from the fine folks at Black Eye Productions (see above). If *Hutch Owen* was any indication of Tom Hart's talent, then New Hat will be a superb comic full of sharp insights and biting humor. You'll just have to pick up a copy and see for yourself.



THE ACME NOVELTY LIBRARY and all characters shown ™ & © Chris Ware. HUTCH OWEN ™ & © Tom Hart.

by Lea Hernandez

current manga and anime controversies

Two issues have been on the minds of anime and manga fans everywhere recently. (And judging from the message traffic in rec.arts.anime on Usenet, on their keyboards, as well.) One is, on the surface, rather trivial; the other has sparked trivial rants, but could have far-reaching implications for fans who have been producing translations of anime and manga, making T-shirts, and creating drawings and paintings of favorite characters. The second also promises serious consequences for people who've been making a living pirating anime videos.

Masumune Shirow's *Intron Depot* features the erotic scenes from *Ghost in the Shell* that didn't make the American cut.

no skin in the states

The first was the exclusion of two rather racy pages from the American translation of Masamune Shirow's *Ghost in the Shell*. They depicted *Shell*'s nominal heroine, Makoto Kusanagi, in a cyber-sex clinch with two other women.

Fans fretted over whether or not these pages, which were in the original manga, as well as in the early editions of Shirow's *Intron Depot* art book, would make the cut. Naturally, they didn't, and fans initially blamed Dark Horse Comics for "censoring" the material, then turned their anger towards Studio Proteus head Toren Smith.

What many of the readers did not know was that Masamune Shirow himself removed the material in question.

Altering manga art is actually rare, especially when you measure the total amount of manga produced against the amount of art removed.

Anime imported for television is often altered drastically. Anime imported for video, the issues of quality of translation and American voice-acting aside, remains virtually unchanged. This is because it, like manga, is not aimed at a children's market.

Why the need for censorship? In the case of anime for television, it's because the perceived market is children. Dumbing down may seem to be the order of the day, but there are other issues. One is that the Japanese have a considerably different attitude about casual nudity in their comics and anime. A bare breast in a television show is no big deal in Japan, but definitely a no-no for an animated action-adventure show (read "kid's show") in the U.S.

Or, as Satoru Fuji of Viz Communications simply puts it, "The rules are different in Japan."

What's acceptable in Japan is not going to be acceptable here. When Viz published Ryoichi Ikegami's *Mai, the Psychic Girl* in the U.S. nearly 10 years ago, a page was deleted because it depicted the teenaged Mai in her bath. The scene is innocent in context, but wasn't going to fly 10 years ago, when content was scrutinized much more closely. Similarly, in Masaomi Kanzaki's *Xenon*, published about the same time, a page was deleted and art altered in a few places to cover bare breasts. Although his preference is not to change art or words, Fuji feels that if such changes don't alter intent, and help a comic reach a wider audience, he's not against it.

Anime and manga fans on the Internet are generally a more savvy lot than the average fan, both in that they know anime and manga do sometimes get changed (for better or for worse) and are likely to have seen the untranslated originals, but a collective gasket was still blown when *Ghost in the Shell* appeared without the pages in question.

GHOST IN THE SHELL ™ & © 1995 Masamune Shirow and Kodansha Ltd. All rights reserved. English translation © 1995 Studio Proteus and Dark Horse.

The furor was such that Toren Smith issued a statement: "A variety of forces made the removal of the two pages necessary. First, the fact that to leave them in would have required a strong 'Mature Readers Only' warning both in the distributors catalog and on the cover of the comic itself.

"However, as both Studio Proteus and Dark Horse are creator-driven companies, we offered Shirow the choice. He himself was tired of getting flak over the pages (even in Japan) and decided to remove the pages, retouch the previous page and rewrite some of the dialogue."

Satisfying fans who want faithful translations and publishers who want profit (which strongly worded warning labels can kill), as well as dodging people who want to tell you what to read, watch and think can be an exasperating task, especially when the end result is sure to satisfy only two of the three.

J.A.I.L.E.D

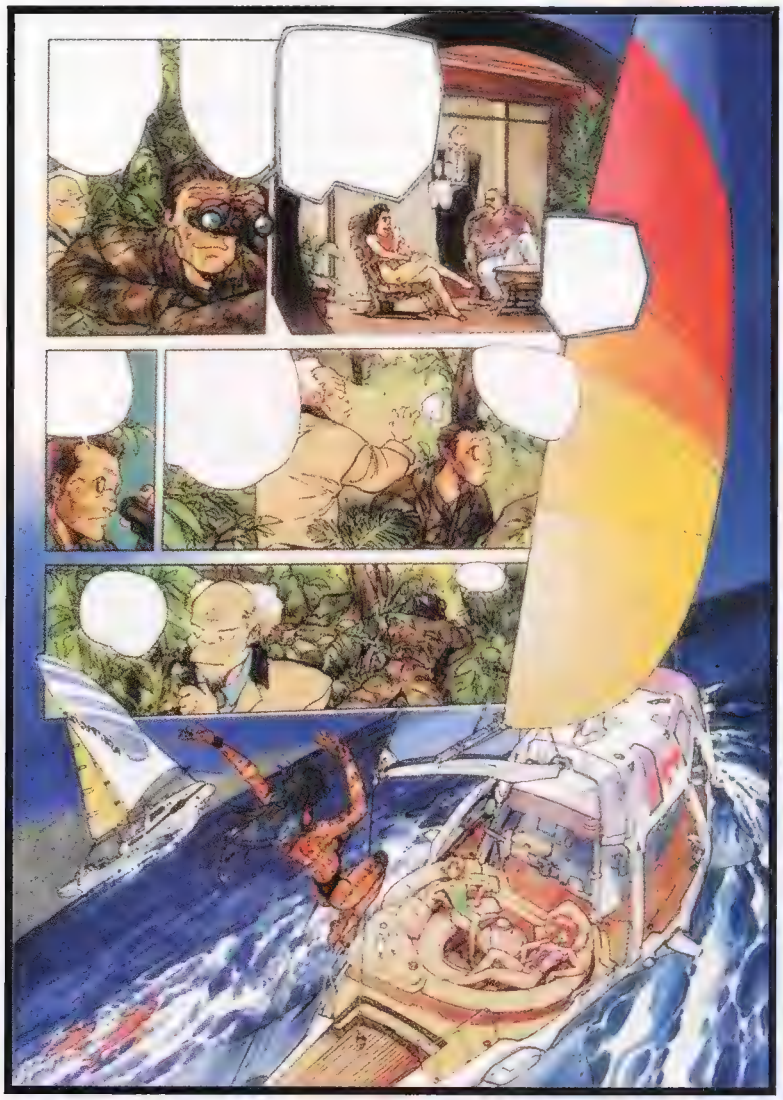
JAPANESE ANIMATION INDUSTRY LEGAL ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

The new anti-piracy organization will crack down on all those manga pirates!

Even Antarctic Press, which brings over adult manga, has elected not to publish at least one story it felt was just too much for the American market, and has passed over other manga for the same reason. Although Antarctic is in the admittedly unique position of not having to delete pages for adult content, Editor-in-Chief Herb Mallette says he's really not for changing art or story. His concern is that changes may change an artist's intent.

Both Antarctic and Studio Proteus have contracts that promise faithful translations. This means that nothing is done without a creator's consent, so what readers read is what creators approved. Unlike television products, there's no reason to worry that you're are seeing a story in a drastically different form.

A retouched page of *Ghost in the Shell* #2 from Dark Horse



bootleggers beware

The second issue is a new anti-piracy organization, J.A.I.L.E.D.—Japanese Animation Industry Legal Enforcement Division. J.A.I.L.E.D. is made up of A.D. Vision, AnimEigo Inc., Central Park Media Corp., Manga Entertainment Inc., Books Nippan, Pioneer Entertainment (USA) L.P., The Right Stuf, Viz Communications and Voyager Entertainment Inc. At this time, Streamline Pictures is not a part of J.A.I.L.E.D. due to a restructuring of Orion Pictures.

The organization's goal is to prevent future piracy of copyrighted material owned by these companies.

J.A.I.L.E.D. also has a toll-free line to report piracy: 1-800-917-9799 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time, voice mail after hours).

Weeks before an official press release was issued, rumors of this new organization was generating furor among anime and manga fans on the Internet. Fans probably have good reason to worry: amateur subtitling groups sell the tapes they produce, and some fans mass-produce art and T-shirts, while other fans sell the translations they produce. Judging from J.A.I.L.E.D.'s stated goal, though, the big losers here will be the bootleggers who appear at anime, science fiction, comic and media conventions and sell their loot through ads and catalogs.

Although more manga and anime is available through legitimate channels than ever before, traditions of fandom continue in the form of fan translations of untranslated material and fan subtitling of videos. Many fans feel that they should be allowed to continue these activities, and have had an extremely negative and emotional reaction to J.A.I.L.E.D.

To counter this, J.A.I.L.E.D. issued a second press release, which addressed the question of how the new group would affect fan activities:

Antarctic Press' english translated manga for adults.

"J.A.I.L.E.D. is certainly not an organization devoted to antagonize anime fans. Anime fans are the basis of our business and we thoroughly appreciate their support and opinions. Rather, we are devoted to maintaining a high level of professionalism and quality throughout the Japanese Animation industry. Therefore, our efforts will be focused on prosecuting the most egregious offenders violating our Intellectual Property rights."

From a purely personal point of view, I think it's about time someone cracked down on the pirates who make enough money in one weekend to pay my rent for six months. On the other hand, it would be an enormously sad thing if fans became afraid to continue expressing their admiration for anime and manga through their newsletters and art. After all, admiration—not profit—is what most of these people who helped build the customer base for the anime market originally intended.

Until next time.

Thanks to all the *Wizard* Manga Scene readers who e-mailed me their thoughts. Keep the e-mail coming to akiyama@cris.com. ☆

Lea Hernandez letters and retouches manga, co-moderates the anime and manga forum for the online service GEnie, and writes and draws comics.

pick of the month

video:
Wings of Honneamise
(Manga Video, $19.95 dubbed, $24.95 subtitled)

While people who enjoy gore-and-girls-driven anime might find this a snoozer, the fact remains that *Wings* is simply one of the best animated films ever made. The surface is *The Right Stuff* set on an alien planet, but the underpinnings are religion, ethics and maturity.

The sheer technical accomplishment this film represents is even more amazing when you consider that the creative team members were almost all under 30 when they made this film, and some of them were still living at home. The love of craft and subject is evident in every frame.

Even though December 31 is still far off, I can assure you that *Wings* isn't just a pick of the month, but of the year.

THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE ™ & © 1995 Bandai Visual. STAINLESS STEEL ARMADILLO ™ & © 1995 Ryukihei. BATTLE BINDER PLUS ™ & © 1995 Rulia 046. VANITY ANGEL ™ & © Kaori Asano.

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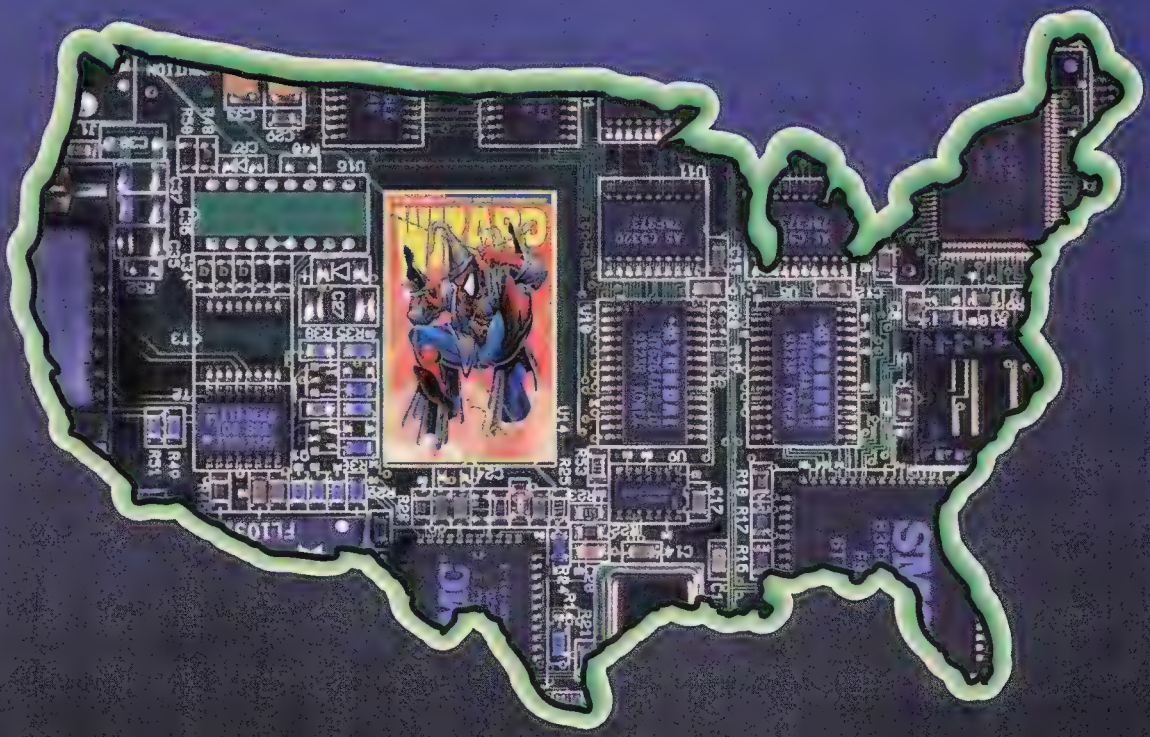
Wire Into Wizard



with America Online®

WIZARD WORLD is *WIZARD*'s new America Online area. Designed with comic book readers in mind, this area has tons of great stuff, including contests, price guides, forums, and chat areas. There's even a place to talk about *MAGIC: THE GATHERING*™ in the *INQUEST* folder. Want to check it out? Sign on to America Online and use the keyword "*WIZARD*," or call **800-754-4400** to get America Online software for your computer.

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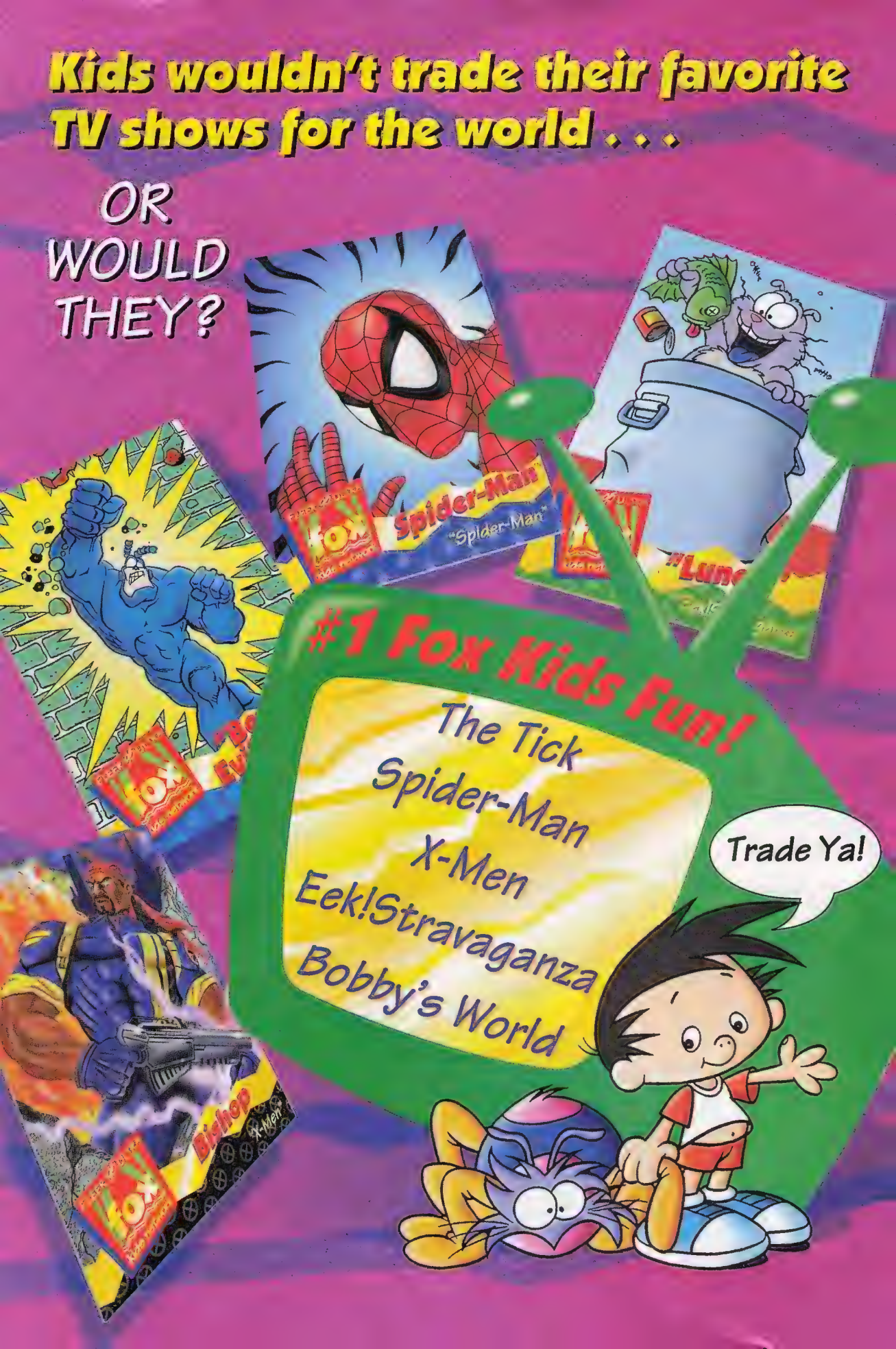
Kids wouldn't trade their favorite TV shows for the world . . .

OR WOULD THEY?



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The Wizard of Cards

FLEER

This December, you can take a look at Marvel characters in a way you never have before.

Fleer Entertainment unveils four artists' unique takes on the Marvel Universe with the upcoming Marvel Masterpieces 1995 card set. Featuring artwork from Nelson DeCastro, Dave DeVries, Peter Scanlan and Dimitri Patelis, the card set will include at least 150 cards and additional subsets and chase cards. Final numbers have yet to be determined for the series.

Fleer's New Masterpieces

The four artists, who helped contribute to the '95 Ultra X-Men and Ultra Spider-Man card sets, combine various artistic styles for one really different set.

Chase cards include 24 limited-edition cards on canvas stock, 14 HoloFlash cards on etched holographic foil and nine Lenticular cards, which will feature four paintings on one card.

Look for more information on this product in future issues of *Wizard*.

• The premiere edition of the Fleer Ultra Fox Kids Network 150-card set explodes onto the scene in August, with cards based on several of Fox's animated series.

The set includes 60 *The Tick* cards, 30 *Spider-Man* cards, 30 *X-Men* cards, 20 *Eek!Stravaganza* cards and 10 from the weekday series *Bobby's World*.

Eight-card packs carry a suggested retail price of $1.49. Chase cards include 24 3-D pop-up cards (one in every pack) and 10 card-size animation cels (one in approximately every six packs).

• Fleer has teamed up with Nickelodeon and the producing team of Klasky-Csupo (*Rugrats, Duckman*) for the Fleer Ultra *AAAHH!!! Real Monsters* set, based on the Nickelodeon animated series, *AAAHH!!! Real Monsters* (What else?).

The 100-card basic set, available in August, will include episode scenes, monster scares, monster life, transportation pictures and a "create your own monster" coloring subset focusing on the exploits of the teenage monster trio of Ickis, Oblina and Krumm. Chase sets will include four Hologram cards and 24 monster pop-up cards, one in every pack. Eight-card packs carry a suggested retail price of $1.49.

• Fleer *Batman Forever* cards have been inserted into the Atlantic Records soundtrack to the film, available at retail outlets nationwide. The Fleer trading card, printed on trading card stock with silver-foil stamping and UV coating, features Val Kilmer as Batman. (And the U2 song alone makes the soundtrack worth buying.)

SKYBOX

DC Villains: The Dark Judgment trading cards debut in early August, featuring such classic villains as The Joker, Darkseid and Doomsday.

Featured artists in the 90-card set include Bill Sienkiewicz, Simon Bisley, Thom Ang, D. Alexander Gregory, Mark Chiarello, Scott Hampton, Kent Williams, Tony Harris and Joe De Vito. Writer Roger Stern (*The Death of Superman* novel, the *Superman: The Man of Tomorrow* series) will handle writing chores for the set.

Bonus cards include a Spectra-etched puzzle depicting The Gathering of Evil, foil-embossed Villains Attack cards and the first-ever comic book SkyMotion card, which brings Two-Face to life with original animated art.

Each seven-card pack has a suggested retail price of $1.79.

• A 90-card *Mortal Kombat* card set tied into the film and direct-to-video animation is scheduled for September. The card set will also feature code hints for the *Mortal Kombat* arcade and home video game.

Two levels of bonus cards include Red-foil and foil-embossed cards. The suggested retail pack price is $1.29, for eight cards.

• Based on the success of the first two series, SkyBox will release its third series of *Star Trek* episode-reviewing cards with *Star Trek: The Next Generation*—The Episode Collection.

Scheduled for release in mid-August, the set will include images taken from actual footage of the show. Season Three includes 108 regular cards documenting the season's 26 episodes. Fans of Doctor Beverly Crusher (Oh, baby!) and Security Chief Commander Worf will be pleased to know that each is highlighted in a nine-card foil-stamped subset. Bonus cards include six foil-stamped and embossed cards featuring Klingon language (*Qapla'*!) and key characters, and two dual-image flip holograms featuring Crusher and Worf.

• *Free Willy 2: The Adventure Home*—the movie starring everyone's favorite whale (next to Moby Dick, of course)—will be avail-

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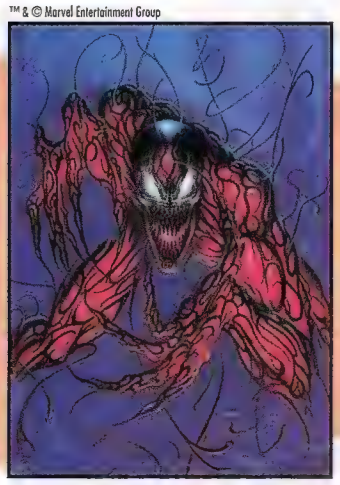

From the '95 Marvel Masterpieces Ultra Spider-Man card set

™ & © Ben Edlund

Spoon! The Tick card set is here!

™ & © Nickelodeon

Fleer and Nickelodeon's *AAAHH!!! Real Monsters*

able in a card series this month. The 90-card set includes 71 cards featuring film scenes and a shot of Keiko, the "real-life Willy." Twelve cards depict scenes from the animated *Free Willy* TV show.

Bonus cards include pop-out cards of animated characters in every pack, nine cards containing a Spectra-etched puzzle and two lenticular bonus cards. Each pack has a suggested retail price of $1.29.

• In other SkyBox news, the scheduled Prophet series has been bumped back one month to a November release....The SkyBox Master Series: Creators Edition Trading Card set slated for September has been reduced by 10 cards to a total of 95. Each six-card pack has a suggested price tag of $1.79. Bonus cards include six of the first-ever both embossed *and* foil-etched cards, the rarest of which is of an all-new character called SkyBox. By the way, the CD-ROM game to which this card line is linked, *SkyBorg: Into the Vortex*, releases in October....SkyBox has acquired the license for two card sets based on two upcoming films: *Jumanji*, the holiday release starring Robin Williams (based on the board game of the same name), and Disney's *Toy Story*.

TOPPS

The Cyberforce Chromium series comes your way in September, featuring art from Marc Silvestri's popular comic.

The series consists of 72 main cards with an 18-card insert set. Artwork will be provided by Silvestri and other talent from Top Cow Productions, Inc., including new *Cyberforce* penciler David Finch. Two levels of chase cards include Clearzone cards and Topps Matrix cards. Each pack carries a suggested retail price of $2.49.

• The *Star Wars* Master Vision set lands on the planet in October. The large-format cards are the same size as comic book covers and printed on 24-point board. The set will offer the best painted art from the Lucasfilm and Topps archives, including works by Dave Dorman, Hugh Fleming, Boris Vallejo, Ken Steacy, Ralph McQuarrie and the Hildebrandt brothers. The cards will be sold both loosely, and as a full set.

Also in November, the *Star Wars* Galaxy III Series debuts. More details to follow next issue.

• The Vampirella Gallery—Topps' first large-format vertical trading card series—will feature artwork new to trading cards starring one of the baddest of the Bad Girls.

COMIC IMAGES

Comic Images makes its initial entry into the booming collectible card game market with *Star Quest: The Regency Wars*.

The game, which makes its debut in July at retailer shows and will be more widely available in September, involves a tale of warring factions struggling to gain control over a galaxy nearly decimated by a deadly viral disaster. The game focuses on five races—Saurians, Cyborgs, Vor'Pa, the savage Gorgon Horde and human Imperium—trying to gain control of the universe.

The game consists of 325 cards (common, uncommon and rare) featuring art from science fiction and fantasy artists such as Frank Frazetta, the Hildebrandts, Luis Royo, Michael Whelan and others. The cards are classified into two separate categories: resource and battle. The series will be available in 53-card starter decks (with the suggested retail price of $7.99) and 15-card booster packs (SRP, $1.79). Two of 30 premium foil Home World cards will be randomly inserted into starter decks.

WILDSTORM PRODUCTIONS

In September, WildStorm Productions will release two trading card sets in the same month for the first time, with the Gen^{13} Chromium trading Cards and Sergio Aragonés's Groo Trading Cards.

The Gen^{13} set contains 107 cards by a variety of popular artists, including J. Scott Campbell, Jim Lee, Whilce Portacio, Travis Charest, Alex Garner, Michael Lopez, Kevin Nowlan, Mike Wieringo, Paul Gulacy, Terry Dodson and Jae Lee.

The set includes swimsuit and battle card subsets, as well as a special nine-card set which contains a new Gen^{13} comic book story written by Brandon Choi.

Bonus card subsets include nine Gen-Active motion trading cards and nine glow-in-the-dark cards.

The Groo set consists of 153 all-new images by Aragonés, with text by *Groo* co-writer Mark Evanier and color by Tom Luth. Bonus card subsets include 50 randomly inserted cards with an original sketch by Aragonés, 500 randomly inserted cards autographed by the artist and nine "Images of Groo" cards by different star artists.

KROME PRODUCTIONS

Berkeley Breathed's "Bloom County" and "Outland" comic strips will make their trading card debut this August, in an all-Chromium Krome Productions set.

The 100-card Bloom County/Outland set will feature such beloved characters as Opus, Bill the Cat, Milquetoast and others. Chromium chase cards are also planned for the set. Each seven-card pack will contain one Chromium sticker—ack!

All of this nifty news was tracked down by the Wizard *staff during a heavy poker game. And yes, the chipmunk cleaned house.*

™ & © White Buffalo Games

Comic Images' *Star Quest: The Regency Wars*

™ & © Michael Whelan

Michael Whelan's *Other Worlds* card set

™ & © Berkeley Breathed

Cat got your tongue? Check out the Bloom County/Outland set.

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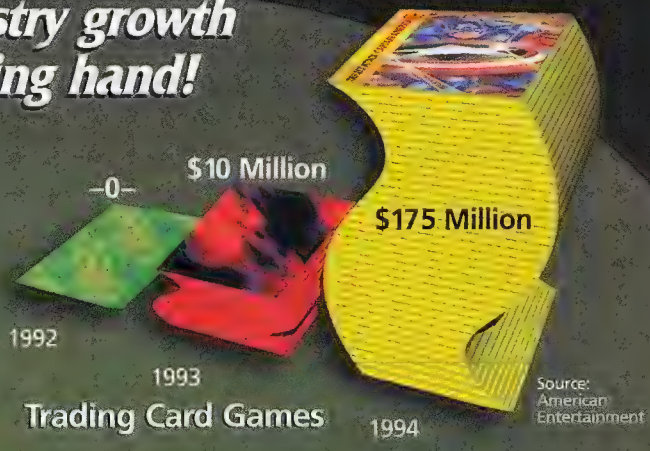
Red Hot industry growth deals a winning hand!

Source:
Capital City
Distribution 1994
Year-end figures



Source:
American
Entertainment

With its dominant share in trading cards, and a card game market that has rocketed into prominence around the world –

Fleer Entertainment captures the excitement & allure of both categories in one fantastic NEW game...Marvel OverPower!

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Each starter deck is pre-set so you know what you get and you get what you need!

6 *different* starter decks to choose from:

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Specially designed with everything you need to play -

- Heroes/Villains and their special abilities
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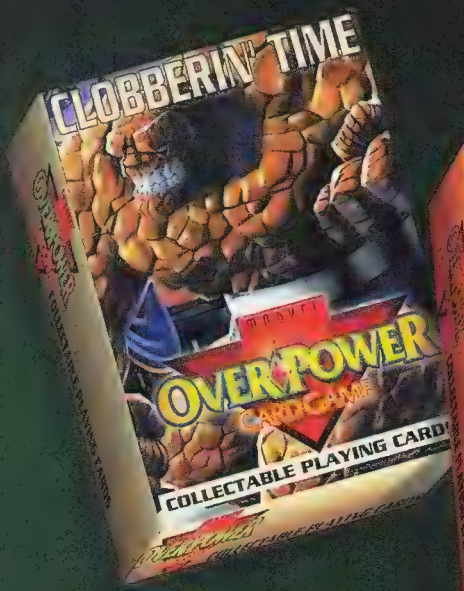
- Universe Cards
- Mission Cards

24 Starter Deck heroes in all!



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Full assortment of Power and Universe Cards including Wild Cards and Teamwork Cards.

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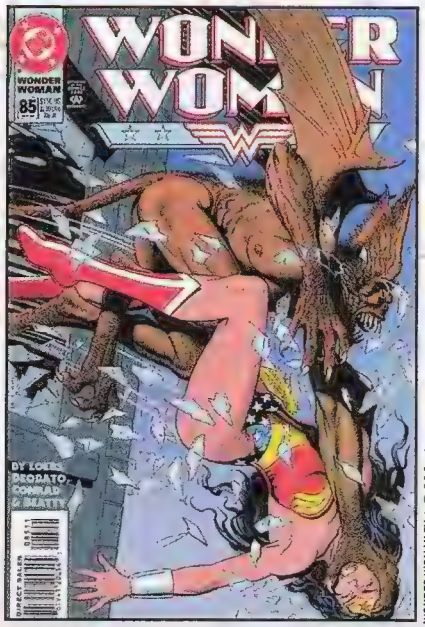
COMIC watch



WONDER WOMAN™ & © DC Comics

Wonder Woman (vol.2) #85

Writer: ***William Messner-Loebs***
Artists: ***Mike Deodato Jr., Terry Beatty and Kevin Conrad***
Publisher: ***DC Comics***
Release date: ***April 1994***

Hey, lookee—another Wonder Woman book is a Comic Watch pick. And with excellent, more-than-credible reason. With *Wonder Woman* #85, DC Comics brought another new talent—artist Mike Deodato Jr.—from its surprise-filled sleeve to a title that desperately needed a sizable push in the market. Deodato Jr. was a major find: putting heart and soul into every single panel he draws, he produces thrilling action scenes (like WW's story-opening battle with a demon) and beautifully realistic figures (including the various killers who hunt down Diana's friends).

Whether or not DC—or the comic world—expected it, this professional's work soon became a tremendous force that catapulted *Wonder Woman* to sales highs (leaving Deodato one popular guy, natch). However, all the excitement actually started when Deodato began his 12-issue run on the series, with issue #90. His stylized depictions of Diana's homeland Themyscira and gorgeous female figures drew readers in, and sent collectors scrambling for this book—which introduced "WWII," Artemis—and the ultrarare #0, in which Deodato and Messner-Loebs brilliantly retold Di's origin.

At first, these collectors only gradually picked up issue #85...*until* Image's pick-up of the Mr. D as *Glory* artist, along with his current *Avengers* stint, really opened people's eyes. And now, this book, Deodato's first work on the amazon's title—and first major comic work, period—is swiftly becoming as hard to find as such an amazing artist. So track down and grab this one—the last page alone makes it all worth it! ☆

good & cheap

by Mike Searle

FLASH™ & © DC Comics

Flash (vol. 1) #275-#277

Writer: ***Cary Bates***
Artists: ***A. Saviuk, F. Chiaramonte and F. McLaughlin***
Current Total Value: ***$9***

OK, even though Iris West, wife of Barry Allen (a.k.a. The Flash), is actually still alive, the way she "died" was a pretty cool story and one of the biggest shocks in comic history.

Flash #275-#277 sets up Professor Zoom (a.k.a. Reverse-Flash) as one of the consummate comic book villains, and as *the* nemesis of the Flash. The way he kills Iris is brutal, merciless, and vicious (*and*, grudgingly, I'll admit it's somewhat ingenious, so I won't give it away). Poor Barry...you'll be feelin' everything in his heart when you read this: rage, desperation, and finally, despair.

All that is coupled with the Flash's disorientation (he's been drugged, and is in severe shock over his wife's death), and you witness a complete mental breakdown of one of the Earth's mightiest heroes. You begin to understand how difficult it must be to live the life of a hero, where powerful (and sometimes truly evil) forces are at work against you—where one sudden mistake could ruin your life.

And in the end, that's what makes the Flash a great hero. Readers witness his darkest moment, and how he battles back and overcomes it. He loses an important piece of himself, but still stays together for the people he has to protect. You gotta respect that. ☆

PICKS
FROM THE WIZARD'S HAT

HERE'S A LISTING OF THE HOTTEST BOOKS, AS SELECTED BY THE *WIZARD* STAFF, SHIPPING IN AUGUST!

Vengeance of Bane II—The Redemption

Writer: ***Chuck Dixon***
Artists: ***Graham Nolan & Eduardo Barreto***
Release Date: ***August 15***
Cover Price: ***$3.95***

DC COMICS If Bane couldn't take down Batman while pumped up on the steroidal "Venom" drug and helped by the Arkham loonies, what chance does our favorite li'l spine-breaker have now that he's dried out and cooling his heels? "Physically, he'll be less imposing," admits writer Chuck Dixon. "But he's pulled himself back into shape in typical Bane fashion—all by himself. So he's even more convinced of his own righteousness, and he's purer in his vision."

While beating his Venom addiction in jail, Bane hears that the drug is being sold on the streets. Incensed, he uses his cunning to break out of jail with the aid of some friends, including KGBeast and Ratcatcher. "It's a great prison story," Dixon says. "His escape is much more spectacular than his earlier one [in the first *Vengeance* one-shot]."

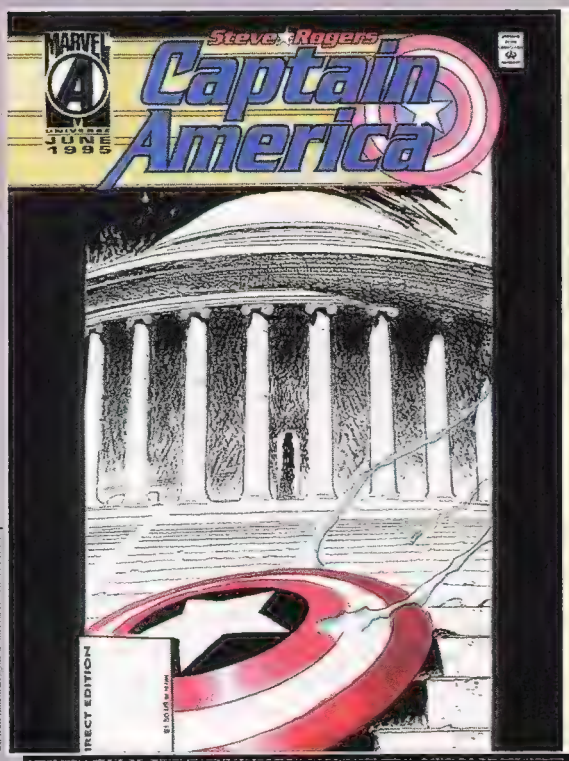
Bane goes after the Venom dealer, and it's not too hard to guess who he bumps into. That means even more trouble than last time for our man Bruce Wayne. "The emotional rages of the Venom are gone," Dixon explains. "So Bane's actually more dangerous than before. His full mental capabilities are available."

The creative team and the 64-page format remain the same from the first one-shot, with the only change coming in the upgraded Miraweb paper. And, oh yes, one other thing's different. "I think we've topped the first one," says Dixon. "It looks great. The guys did a hell of a job."

Is this Bane's swan song? Not by a long shot, Dixon reveals. "This issue will position Bane as a recurring nemesis for Batman. But we're not going to turn him into [Spider-Man's latest nemesis] Venom, where you see him every month or anything," he laughs. "His appearances will always herald something very special." Sounds like this issue won't be an exception to that rule. —Craig Shutt

VENGEANCE OF BANE™ & © DC Comics

Captain America #444



CAPTAIN AMERICA ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Writer: ***Mark Waid***
Artists: ***Ron Garney & Mike Sellers***
Release Date: ***August 8***
Cover Price: ***$1.50***

MARVEL After an incredible 10-year run, Mark Gruenwald turns the writing chores on the venerable star-spangled Avenger over to Mark Waid. Is the fan-favorite writer of *Flash* and *Impulse* and the dialoguer for all kinds of X-books up to the challenge? "I'm looking forward to this," he says. "It's coming along great." And he's got some pretty ambitious plans to push Cap back onto everyone's Must-Read list.

Cap's post-Gruenwald career doesn't start off on the best footing, however. In #444, armed terrorists kidnap the president and demand only one ransom—the shield slinger. Unfortunately, Cap is nowhere to be found. "The Avengers have to deal with this crisis while the world wonders if Cap is a coward, or if this is too big for him to cope with," Waid explains. "We'll see how Cap's viewed from different perspectives in the Marvel Universe."

The issue offers a prelude to "Operation Rebirth," which runs through #445-#448. That story heralds the return of the Red Skull, as well as a character who Waid will only hint is "someone we haven't seen in 20 years." It also features Cap "facing a challenge he's never faced before, the biggest of his career." Can Waid generate the same buzz on this wing-headed hero as he did on DC's? Stay tuned. —CS

Darkseid Vs. Galactus: The Hunger

Writer: ***John Byrne***
Artist: ***John Byrne***
Release Date: ***August 8***
Cover Price: ***$4.95***

DC COMICS/MARVEL "As soon as I heard the premise, I knew how this story would end," says writer-artist John Byrne. Following July's high-profile revamping of *Wonder Woman*, Byrne presents a one-shot crossover that pits Marvel's devourer of worlds against DC's malevolent master of Apokolips.

The tale takes place prior to Galactus's first visit to Earth, when the Silver Surfer served as herald to the most powerful being in the universe. Fortunately, Byrne says, when Galactus arrives at Apokolips, "he's really wasted. Otherwise, this story would have taken three panels to tell. Darkseid may be a god, but Galactus is a force of nature."

Darkseid is far from powerless against the world-eater, of course. At one point, Darkseid animates a portion of the planet, causing it to rear up and attack Galactus. But that's the only direct physical combat Galactus takes part in. "The main punching and hitting will occur between Orion and the Silver Surfer," Byrne says. Key roles also will be played by Lightray and Highfather, he reveals, while a Watcher will appear in flashback scenes. Readers will also experience the cataclysmic first meeting of the Silver Surfer and Black Racer!

So who wins, John? C'mon, you can tell us! "Darkseid does not actually defeat Galactus," he says cagily. "Let's just leave it at that." —CS

DARKSEID ™ & © DC Comics. GALACTUS ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group.

Avengers/UltraForce #1

THOR ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group. PRIME™ & © Malibu Comics Entertainment.

Writers: ***Warren Ellis (Malibu), Glenn Herdling (Marvel)***
Artists: ***George Pérez (Malibu), Angel Medina (Marvel)***
Release Date: ***August 15 (both books)***
Cover Price: ***$3.95***

MARVEL/MALIBU The relationship between Marvel and Malibu really gets steamy this month, as each releases its half of the Avengers/UltraForce crossover. "It's got George Pérez art, and you can't get cooler than that," points out Malibu editor Hank Kanalz. "George does the most outstanding Avengers of anyone." Pérez not only draws the Malibu half (*Ultraforce/Avengers* #1), which is the story's second part, but he pencils both covers, which fit together into one dramatic illustration.

The story spins out of Rune's adventures in the Marvel Universe, where he found the Infinity Gems and took them with him back to the Ultraverse. Now Loki, following his appearance in the *Godwheel* mini-series, intends to collect all six gems and take over everything. All that stands in his way is the combined might of the Avengers and UltraForce, who were brought together after the Avengers' Black Knight and Sersi found a breach into the Ultraverse. What they don't know (but readers of July's *Eliminator* #3 do) is that Sersi holds a wild card that makes her a pivotal player in the drama.

This tale leads into a major storyline called "Black September," which dramatically changes both universes. Included is Kevin (Prime) Green travelling to the Marvel Universe, where he runs into everyone's favorite web-swinger! —CS

Mars Attacks #1

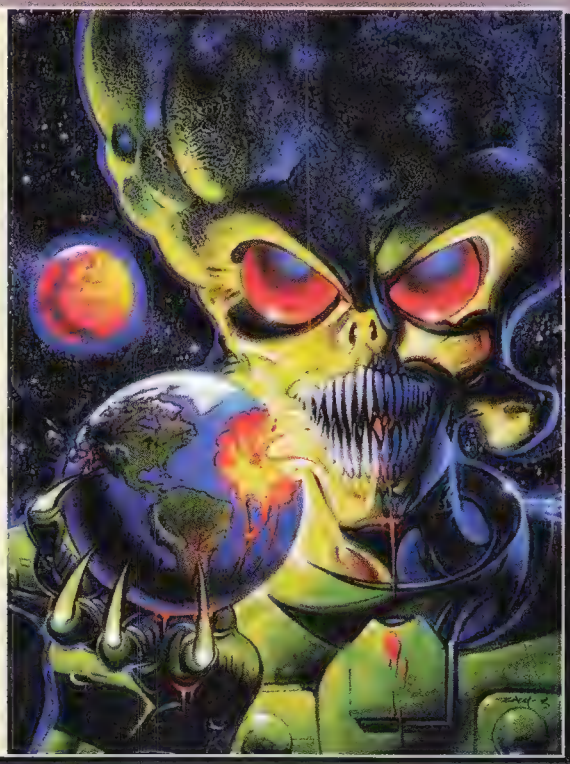
Writer: ***Keith Giffen***
Artist: ***Charles Adlard***
Release Date: ***August 8***
Cover Price: ***$2.95***

TOPPS This ongoing series expands upon the foundation of Topps' mini-series, which was inspired by the recently re-released trading card set. Keith Giffen writes the first issue, then turns the reins over to series editor Dwight Zimmerman. He finishes the five-issue first arc with Giffen's "input and inspiration."

During the course of this arc, we'll be checking in with many of the characters who appeared the first time around. That includes Woody Brown (named for Mars Attacks creators Woody Gelman and Len Brown), who's in a refuge camp on the Martian side and is about to become dinner for a tribe of cannibals. Nurse McKay isn't doing much better, as she's forced to become a guinea pig in a Martian breeding experiment.

We'll also be reintroduced to everyone's favorite giant insects, when the Martians have to deal with a giant ant colony that's taken over San Diego. "For the first time, we'll see a Martian military operation going full bore," Zimmerman says. That includes Seek And Destroy Advanced Armored Mechanical—Insects (SADAAM-Is), which are cyborg insects with human heads. Mmm, baby.

The series gains a major push next summer, when the Warner Brothers movie, to be directed by Tim Burton, is released. The film will be adapted in the comic's run, making this a great time to jump on the bandwagon. —CS



MARS ATTACKS ™ & © The Topps Company Inc.

MORE PICKS

The following pages list the peachiest titles shipping in August, as selected and written by the *Wizard* staff. Books marked with a check ✓ sign are comics that should not be overlooked on the often-stuffed comic shelf.

Akira #34

MARVEL "Tetttttttsuoooo, I'm back!!!" After about three friggin' years of agonizing waiting, the final issue of this epic manga series is finally out. This issue picks up right where the action left off, and leads you to the ultimate concluding battle. Discover the fate of the world in this 64-page baby! By Katsuhiro Otomo, with Jo Duffy and Steve Oliff. **$6.95**

Aquaman #13

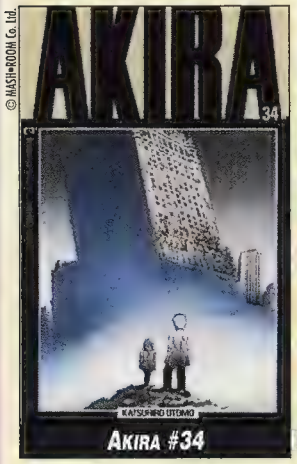
DC COMICS It's Aquaman vs. Thanatos (that's Mera's hubby) in Mera's dimension. What's worse, The Others show ol' Thanny the way to Aquaman's dimension. Hey, if there was just one more dimension in this comic, you'd need those neat 3-D glasses! By Peter David, Marty Egeland and Howard Shum. **$1.75**

The Batman Adventures #36

DC COMICS Sniff. Sniff. Sorry, but it's the last issue of *Batman Adventures*. But that's OK, 'cause next month starts *The Batman and Robin Adventures*! Anyway, this issue sees Batman and Catwoman working together (Mwrrroww!) after they both come down with a bad case of amnesia. "Hmm, Selina. Where're my pants...?" By Ty Templeton, Mike Parobeck and Rick Burchett. **$1.75**

Batman Books

DC COMICS "The Baaaat? Awww, there ain't no Bat!" Well, actually there is, and he's all over the place this month. First off, check out *Batman* #523, where The Scarecrow's offin' all of his old schoolmates. Even that fat kid named Eugene who used to eat all that paste! Graduate up to *Batman: Shadow of the Bat* #43 for "The Secret of the Universe," Part 1 (of 3). It's animals galore, as Batman goes after Catwoman, who stole some sacred doohicky from Catman, all while the Ratcatcher lets loose a herd (a herd?) of rats in Gotham. Then get yer fans out, 'cause it's a hot one over in *Detective Comics* #690. Firefly ends up in the hotseat when he confuses his work with his social life, and ends up burning down the very place where his date is. It's up to the Dynamic Duo to put out the flames and save Firefly's chick. **$1.95 EACH**



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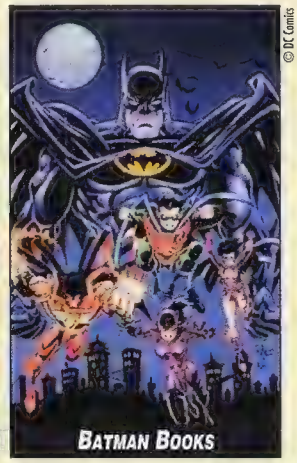
Akira #34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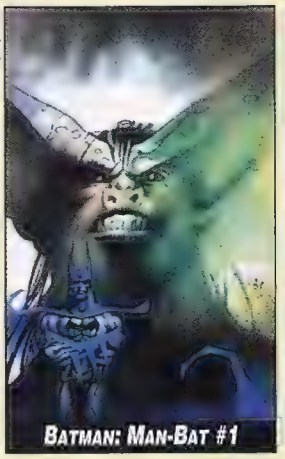
Batman Books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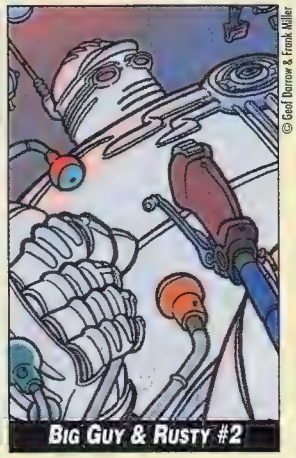
Batman: Man-Bat #1


© Geof Darrow & Frank Miller

Big Guy & Rusty #2

Batman: Man-Bat #1 (of 3)

DC COMICS Oh, baby! It's finally here, and Man-Bat's never looked better! This Elseworlds tale sees the Dark Knight confront his winged counterpart, the Man-Bat, a.k.a. Kirk Langstrom. It seems Langstrom's bent on creating a whole new race of Man-Bats that will take over the world, and only Batman's man enough to stop him. More rodents then you can shake a stick at, by Jamie Delano and John Bolton. **$4.95**

The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot #2 (of 2)

LEGEND/DARK HORSE We got a problem here. Seems there's this four billion-year-old creature, who's so friggin' big that he blocks out the sun. The sun! Are you listening to me? And what's worse—besides George Hamilton losing his tan—is that he's come to wipe out humanity and reclaim Earth for himself. That just can't be good. So, The Big Guy and Rusty try to put an end to him, but good. By Frank Miller and Geof Darrow. **$4.95**

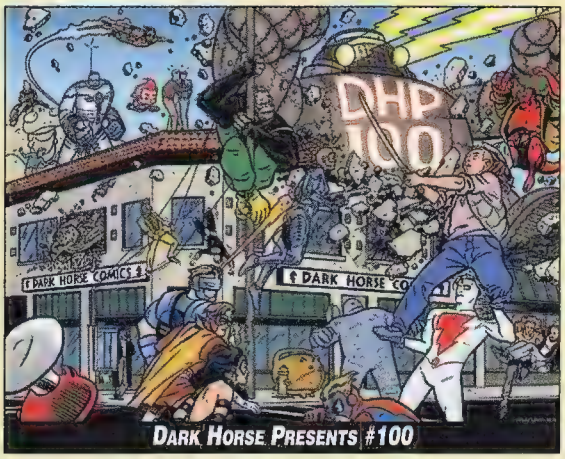
Catwoman #25

DC COMICS It's "Beat the Clock," as Catwoman and the PsybaRats (shouldn't that be PsyBrats?) are competing for the late billionaire C. Carstairs Biddle's fortune, which he hid somewhere in his mansion. Oh yeah, there's plenty o' booby traps protectin' the goods! And just for kicks, Robin jumps in to make sure everyone's playing fair. (Guess they couldn't find Bob Barker.) A double-sized issue by Chuck Dixon, Doug Moench, Jim Balent, Bob Smith and James A. Hodgkins. **$2.95**

Dark Horse Presents #100

DARK HORSE This anniversary issue is so freakin' huge, that Dark Horse has made it into a five-issue mini-series! Why, that's just unprecedented! What were they thinking? This series features the talents of Frank Miller, Geof Darrow, Paul Chadwick, Harvey Pekar, Eddie Campbell, Evan Dorkin, Berni Wrightson, Mike Mignola, Paul Pope and Dave Gibbons, to name just a few. This series is just chock full of good ol' stories! **$2.50 EACH**

MORE PICKS



© Dark Horse

DARK HORSE PRESENTS #100

EXTREME 3000 PRELUDE

IMAGE "MARTY, WE'VE GOTTA GO BACK...TO THE FUTURE!!" The future of Image, that is! This new storyline, which will be spread out into four mini-series this fall, shows you a completely different "image" of a world you only thought you knew. Martial law is enforced by the Youngblood in the entire western hemisphere, while a secret society called the NewMen are constantly causing trouble. Manhattan is now a prison state for some heavy-duty criminals (Yeah, that's real different than Manhattan now!). And Supreme's offspring are using their godlike powers to gain some high positions of power. By Rob Liefeld, Eric Stephenson and Roger Cruz. Also check out *Team Youngblood* #21 this month, which continues the Extreme 3000 storyline. Badrock returns from the future to stop the team from drastically *changing* the future! By Eric Stephenson and Roger Cruz. **$2.50 EACH**

✓ FLASH #106

DC COMICS That Wally West character has like the worst luck with women. Things are doin' pretty OK with him and Linda, and then that New Titan, Magenta, shows up to tell her ex-sweetie (that's Wally for you slow folks) all about the pain she's been goin' through. Plenty of messed-up romances, courtesy of Mark Waid, Oscar Jiminez and Jose Marzan, Jr. Waid says, "Wally's old girlfriend shows up. Thanks to events that have spooled out of *New Titans*, she's about six steps on the other side of crazy. It's not so much a Wally story as it is a Linda story. And this really kind of puts a definite spin on where their relationship is going to go from here on out." **$1.75**

GLORY #0

IMAGE You've spent more than enough time droolin' over Glory and her assets. It's high time you learned somethin' about her. This puppy gives ya the skinny on Glory's origin and her ever-lovin' mission. By Jo Duffy and Mike Deodato Jr. **$2.50**

GODZILLA #3

DARK HORSE Godzilla finishes puttin' the kibosh on that man-made Cybersaur (silly humans!), only to come face to face with a giant bat-lizard-monster thingie from outer space that saw the fight and decided to head towards Earth and eat the loser of the battle. What the hell are they smokin' over at Dark Horse? Well, you're guaranteed plenty of bloody action by Kevin Maguire, Brandon McKinney and Scott Reed. **$2.50**

GREEN GOBLIN #1

MARVEL The newest incarnation of that pumpkin-throwin' freak gets his own series! Wow—at this rate, Spidey's villains may have more titles going than him! Find out where the Goblin got his new threads and his deadly pack o' weapons. (And what he keeps in his pants!) By Tom DeFalco and Scott McDaniel. **$2.95**

GREEN LANTERN #67

DC COMICS Hey, kids. There's a new ruler of New York City, and his name's Sonar. (Guess that Giuliani character is high-tailin' it outta town!) After he gets himself a nice big throne in Times Square, the high-exalted mystic ruler asks for the execution of Green Lantern and that li'l speedster the Flash. It's up to you, New York/Newww Yorrrk/Daa da da da... By Ron Marz, Paul Pelletier and Romeo Tanghal. **$1.75**

✓ ICON #30

MILESTONE/DC Following this summer's riot, Icon packs his bags and heads for the stars again. And believe you me (What the hell kind of expression is that, anyway?), he ain't ever coming back! (Yeah, OK.) Also, he's got a surprising little stowaway. (Ten bucks says it's Soleil Moon Frye.) By Dwayne McDuffie, M.D. Bright and Mike Gustovich. **$2.50**

✓ THE INCREDIBLE HULK #434

MARVEL "Over the Edge," Epilogue. This puppy has the funeral of the year, but we won't tell ya whose it is! Guest stars galore include Wolverine, Forge and Banshee (OK, that rules those three out as buyin' the farm. Although bein' in a casket *does* count for a guest appearance...) By Peter David and J.R. Justiniano. **$1.95**

KURT BUSIEK'S ASTRO CITY #1

IMAGE Welcome to Astro City, and no, Kurt Busiek doesn't live

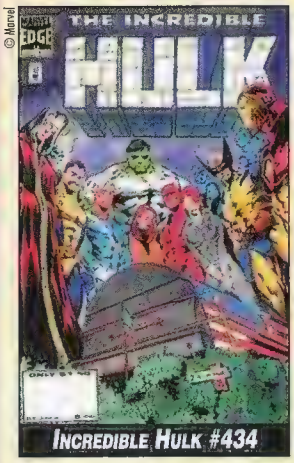
© Rob Liefeld

GLORY #0

© Marvel

GREEN GOBLIN #1

MORE PICKS



© Marvel

INCREDIBLE HULK #434

© Kurt Busiek

KURT BUSIEK'S ASTRO CITY #1

here (damn tourists)! In our first issue, you'll meet The Samaritan. Gosh, he's a heck of a noble guy. He'll be introducing you to the Honor Guard and be participatin' in a nasty ol' skirmish with The Living Nightmare. Make sure you keep your hands inside o' the bus! By Kurt Busiek and Brent Anderson, with an absolutely "marvelous" Alex Ross cover. **$2.25**

LADY DEATH IN LINGERIE #1

CHAOS! Yeah, like you haven't already seen enough of her! Well, the Queen of the Dead puts on a little fashion show for you kiddies hopped up on hormones. Plus, you'll also see the winner of *Wizard* #46's Lady Death swimsuit contest. What the hell's she doin' wearing a swimsuit in a lingerie special? By waaay too many artists to even attempt listing. **$2.95**

MAGNUS, ROBOT FIGHTER #59-#60

ACCLAIM Hoo boy. Looks like Magnus is back, but is it really him? Whatever the case, Magnus and Rai go at it big time in a final showdown. Then in issue #60, the Malevs are back! This time they're helping us out, seeing as how there's a nasty new creature called Hyve who's bent on world domination. Sick creep. By Keith Giffen, Kevin Kobasic, Grey and Mike DeCarlo. **$2.50 EACH**

NIGHTWING #2 (OF 4)

DC COMICS It's yet another new costume for Nightwing. They should bring back his original '70s stylin' one! It was so jazzed! Anyway, Dick here jumps back into the crime-fightin' scene as the mystery surrounding his parents' death deepens. By Denny O'Neil, Greg Land and Mike Sellers. **$2.25**

✓ PUNX #2 (OF 4)

ACCLAIM You want punks? You got 'em! You want riff raff, street scum, noisy, loitering, freaks of nature? You got those, too! This issue has something to do with the Harbingers and a bunch of other stuff. And as Rip Taylor puts it, "It's FUNNY!" By Keith Giffen and Claude St. Aubain. Giffen says, "I guess the main thing to realize is that it's more stream-of-consciousness nonsense, which is really what the book is. It starts off with a standard comic book fight scene, and then it turns into an appendix to Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics*, and Scott himself walks in. Then we grudgingly go back to the main story. I'm having fun again." **$2.50**

ROBIN #21

DC COMICS "Ninja Camp," Part 1 (of 2). Neat, sounds like a John Hughes film! While investigating the death of one of his classmates, Tim stumbles upon a training camp for ninjas! Also, Ariana visits Tim in the middle of the night for a secret rendezvous. (Hubba hubba!) By Chuck Dixon, Mike Wieringo and Stan Woch. **$1.95**

SAVAGE DRAGON #22

IMAGE The big, green, fin-headed cop meets up with those funky little green guys from the sewers again! Yep, it's time for another crossover of unusually green proportions. The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles meet up with the Dragon in Chicago, while hunting one of their foes. This two-parter starts in Mirage Studios' *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles/Savage Dragon Crossover*, and ends right here! By Erik Larsen. **$2.50—*SAVAGE DRAGON*; $2.75—*TURTLES/DRAGON CROSSOVER***

SHI/CYBLADE #1

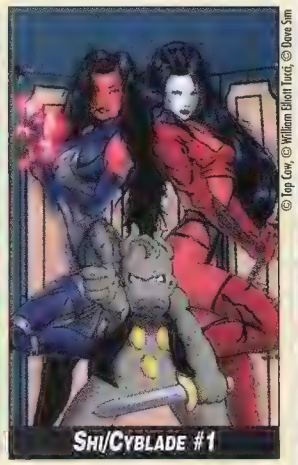
CRUSADE/IMAGE "The Battle for Independents" concludes! Your two favorite babes from Crusade and Image team up to save the entire world from the Corporate Monster and its savage followers! Plus, a special guest appearance by Cerebus' own Dave Sim! (What the hell—?!) A portion of this book's profits are goin' to the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund and an as-yet-unnamed small press publisher. So help out your fellow creators! By William Tucci, Marc Silvestri, Dave Sim and a bunch more guys! **$2.95**

SPAWN #35

IMAGE Those bumbling detectives, Sam and Twitch, have linked psycho-nut Billy Kincaid to Chief Banks. Good ol' police department! Also, it seems that Terry Fitzgerald twerp is crossin' the line to the Dark Side (But isn't he already kinda dark? Ooooh, we can get in lotsa trouble for that one if it's taken the wrong way!) The evilness just flows from this baby! By Todd McFarlane and Greg Capullo. Also, check out *Spawn: Blood*

© Brian Pulido

LADY DEATH IN LINGERIE #1


© Top Cow, © William Elliott Tucci, © Dave Sim

SHI/CYBLADE #1

Feud #3 (of 4), where Spawn is friendless, costumeless and being hunted as a vampire. Sometimes life just sucks. By Alan Moore, Tony Daniel and Kevin Conrad. **$1.95—*SPAWN*; $2.25—*SPAWN: BLOOD FEUD***

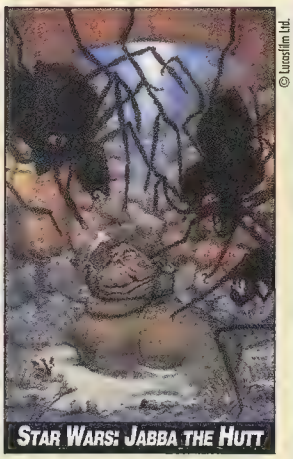
Spider-Man Books

MARVEL You can all breathe a little easier, now that the Clone fiasco seems to be hitting its final stages. *Spectacular Spider-Man* #228 features "Timebomb," Part 1 (of 2). Kaine's vision of Mary Jane's murder comes to fruition, as Peter turns out to be her killer! (Insert your own O.J. joke here.) For Part 2, check out *Web of Spider-Man* #129. The Scarlet Spughster and the New Warriors try to stop Peter from killing Mary Jane. Swing yer way to *Amazing Spider-Man* #406 for "The Greatest Responsibility," Part 1 (of 3). It's Spidey and the Ugh vs. the all-new, all-female Doc Ock. Female? (What the—? Ya mean Doc Ock is now a...a...girl?) Part 2 of the battle comes in *Spider-Man* #63, then hang up yer tights and read about the end of Spider-Man in *Spectacular Spider-Man* #229. Once again, Peter Parker throws away his life as Spider-Man, but this time I think he really means it! And if ya wanna just forget alla this Clone Crap and just read some good old-fashioned Spidey stories, check out *Untold Tales of Spider-Man* #2, where a young Spidey must stop the Batwing! (Batwing? What, is the Jackal cloning DC characters now?) **$1.50 EACH; $1.95—*SPIDER-MAN*; $3.95—*SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN* #229 (DELUXE); $2.50—*SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN* #229 (REGULAR); 99 CENTS—*UNTOLD TALES***

Star Wars Books

DARK HORSE *Star Wars: X-Wing—Rogue Squadron* #2 sees Wedge downed in battle. (Imagine that.) He's gotta team up with the Cilpari folks, who don't really dig the Rebels too much. Ah, Wedge has survived much worse. (Chewie once used his X-Wing as a toilet.) *Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi—The Sith War* #1 (of 6) picks up six months after the whole *Dark Lords of the Sith* thing. Exar Kun and Ulic Qel-Droma are still trying to bring back the Golden Age of the Sith, but then Johnny Quick and Liberty Belle come in an' try to stop Dan the Dyna-Mite, who... Oh. Wait. Wrong book. Sorry. Ahem. It quickly seems like Kun is only interested in getting a mega-powerful Sith Holocron! And to round out your *Star Wars* month, pick up *Star Wars: Jabba the Hutt—The Dynasty Trap*. Ol' lardbutt gets caught with his pants down (even though he doesn't really wear pants) when he tries to unload a stolen freighter, only to meet with some...trouble. (Hey, try saying that last bit in a RoboCop voice. It's really neat.) **$2.95—*ROGUE SQUADRON*; $2.50—*SITH WARS, DYNASTY TRAP***

© Lucasfilm Ltd.
STAR WARS...SITH WAR #1


© Lucasfilm Ltd.
STAR WARS: JABBA THE HUTT

✓ Starman #12

DC COMICS "Sins of the Child," Part 1 (of 5). Jack Knight's gotta run through a slew o' traps set up by the new Mist, just to grab his Star Staff. And to make sure nothing gets in her way, the Mist takes steps against Solomon Grundy, Michael that wacky alien, and (look out!) Ted Knight! By James Robinson and Tony Harris. Robinson says, "It's sort of a sequel to the 'Sins of the Father,' which started the whole book off. It introduces a new Mist, who'll be Starman's arch-enemy. It is a pretty unique attempt at storytelling, in that the five-issue storyline takes place over the course of one day. And it is the same day seen through different people's perspectives. I actually split Jack's day in half to bookend the whole adventure. The storyline will also set the seed for the [upcoming] *Starman/Sandman Mystery Theatre* crossover which will immediately follow it. [It] will be the first DC/Vertigo crossover." **$2.25**

Superboy #20

DC COMICS The littlest "S" around returns to the Silicon Dragons' stomping ground, where he bumps uglies with the Scavenger, who seems to have claimed the Dragons' abandoned HQ as his own. By Karl Kesel, Tom Grummett and Doug Hazlewood. **$1.95**

Superman Books

DC COMICS The joke's on you, bucko! Over in *Action Comics* #714, the Joker visits Metropolis to put an end to some slimy toy manufacturer who's made an entire line based on the grinnin' freak! *Superman: The Man of Steel* is no laughing matter, though, when Supes discovers a plot to kidnap all of Metropolis' kids in issue #49. Gosh, the Big "S" sure is

© Todd McFarlane
SPAWN #35

© DC Comics
STARMAN #12

MORE PICKS

busy this month. Over in *Superman* #105, he teams up with Green Lantern to stop some alien freaks who've come to Earth in search of some different Green Lanterns. Speaking of xenophobia, pick up *Adventures of Superman* #528, where the Man of Steel meets another wacky alien in a neat story told from the alien's point of view. And finally (whew), *Superman: The Man of Tomorrow* #2 sees Lex Luthor enlisting Parasite to take down Supes. **$1.95 EACH**

✓ Tarzan vs. Predator At the Earth's Core #2 (of 4)

DARK HORSE OK. On one side, you've got a half-naked jungle guy who can yell really loud and fight pretty good. On the other, you've got these big-toothed, fully armed, squid-faced killing machines. Place your bets. By Walter Simonson and Lee Weeks. Simonson says, "The second issue is primarily a sort of one-on-one duel between Tarzan and a Predator. There's a lot of other stuff going on—which of course, like book reports in sixth grade, I'm not at liberty to reveal because I want you to go out and read the book. There's a lot of back story going on, which will kind of be running around behind the duel." **$2.50**

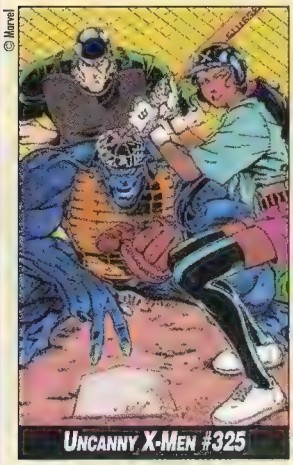
Team One: WildC.A.T.s #2 (of 2)

IMAGE The very first WildC.A.T.s team joins together to free an American missile base from Helspont and Slaughterhouse Smith, who are hoping to start World War III. By James Robinson and Rich Johnson. Also check out *Team One: StormWatch* #2, where that first team also takes on Helspont and Slaughterhouse Smith in a North Dakotan missile site. By Steven Seagle and Tom Raney. **$2.50 EACH**

WildC.A.T.s #23

IMAGE The C.A.T.s land on Khera, only to find that it ain't the paradise they thought it was. Meanwhile, back on Earth, Mr. Majestic assembles his own WildC.A.T.s team as an anti-crime unit. By Alan "Only one human being has ever taken my photograph, and I ate him" Moore, Travis Charest and Troy Hubbs. **$2.50**

© Marvel



Uncanny X-Men #325

Untold Tales of Spider-Man #2

© Marvel

© Twentieth Century Fox

The X-Files #8

X-O Manowar #54

© Acclaim

✓ Wonder Woman #102

DC COMICS The Wonder Babe and her new police buddy head off to Apokolips and meet up with Metron of the New Gods. But when he reveals some shocking facts about Themyscira's history, Wondie returns to her homeland to save her fellow Amazonian mamas from Darkseid's vengeance! By John Byrne. **$1.95**

The X-Files #8

TOPPS COMICS Mulder visits Nome, Alaska, where some nutcases believe the Earth is hollow. They show him a photo of an Aztec city buried in the ice. After an FBI raid, some explosions, and plenty of confusion, Mulder and Scully end up prisoners in the Aztec city itself! Also, pick up *The X-Files Annual* #1. When a professor tries to unlock the secrets of mankind's origins through a female hominid named Eve, he is mysteriously killed—as are the pilots who transported Eve's ancient bones. Scully and Mulder try to crack the case and discover the truth behind Eve. Both X-cellent tales are by Stefan Petrucha and Charles Adlard. **$2.95—*X-FILES*; $3.95—*X-FILES ANNUAL***

X-Men Books

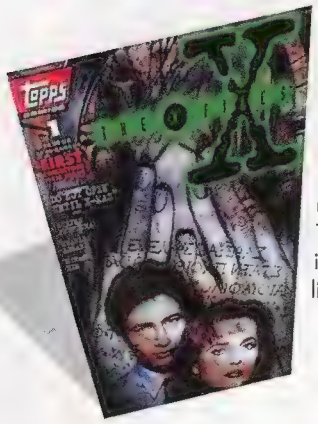
MARVEL By Lenin's bones! Colossus makes his shocking return to his mutant buddies (Don't forget that that traitorous, rat-bastard scum ran off with Magneto!) in *Uncanny X-Men* #325. This 48-page giant helps kick off the all-new X-Men's 20th anniversary with the threat of Gene Nation. The party continues in *X-Men* #45, when Gambit's ultimate secret is revealed. Set up a ring and fill it with plenty o' Jell-O, 'cause it's Rogue vs. Gambit, no holds barred! **$3.95 EACH**

X-O Manowar #53-#54

ACCLAIM COMICS With no home, no friends and no business, what's a Visigoth to do? Why, head off into space and discover the origin of his new armor and some sort of purpose in life! And while Aric's flyin' around, he gets imprisoned in a stasis field by some newfangled aliens that he ain't ever seen before. That's just not good news for them aliens! By Bart Sears, Andy Smith and Ray Kryssing. **$2.50 EACH**

TOP TEN COMICS

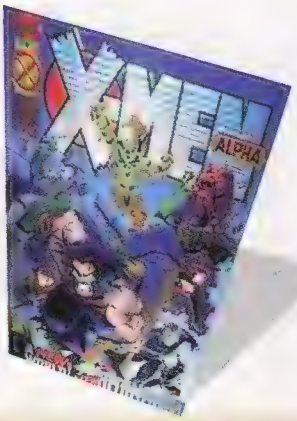
***Wizard*, by staying in touch with hundreds of retailers throughout the country, keeps a close eye on the country's hottest back issues. Here are this month's hottest back issues.**



1. X-FILES #1

WRITER: Stefan Petrucha ARTIST: Charles Adlard

"There's something out there." Yeah, there's something out there, all right—it's called a cult frenzy! Those psycho, obsessed, freak-of-nature fans of one of FOX's hottest TV shows just can't get enough of the first comic book appearance of agents Dana Scully and Fox Mulder. And with the recent release of the two *X-Files* reprint books (which re-present the first three issues, then the first six, of Topps' mega-hot series), even more fans will have their eyes opened to this sci-fi comic, further increasing its readership. But if you wanna talk conspiracies, just look at these two freakin' pages! There's like four X-books in the list! I know 25 other letters that are gettin' a mighty bit suspicious.



2. X-MEN ALPHA #1

WRITERS: Scott Lobdell and Mark Waid ARTISTS: Roger Cruz and Tim Townsend

It's time to learn your Greek. OK, we'll start with Alpha and eventually work our way to Prime. (Uh...don't ask about Beta or anything.) This here's the kicker to the whole "Age o' Apocalypse" thing that flip-flopped the X-Men and showed you an even darker and more dismal world than you're used to. Here's the skinny: Legion goes back in time to kill Magneto. Botches it up big time and kills his dad, Prof. X, instead. World changes. Apocalypse is king. Humans are slaughtered. Mutants are rampant. End of story...for a while. And quite the exciting tale it was. Well-written and pretty darn well-illustrated, as well. In fact, the only major disappointment in the whole thing was that Lockheed was nowhere to be found. We mean, c'mon, he's easily the best X-Man around.

3. LADY DEATH: BH&H (CHROMIUM VERSION) #1

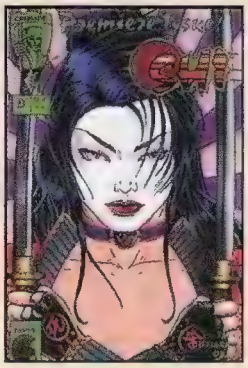
WRITER: Brian Pulido
ARTIST: Steven Hughes

Does she look pissed or what? Heck, if we had to walk around wearing a bra that was like 18 sizes too small, we'd be pretty cranky, too. And if she happened to put on one o' them wonderbras, Lady Death'd probably put out somebody's eye. Anywho, the Queen of the Dead's newest mini-series takes a huuuuge jump this month. This spamtastic series introduces a pretty rough vixen by the name o' Purgatori (Hmm...isn't that like a place between Heaven and Hell? Oh! We get it now!), who's out to drain Lady Death of her powers and even take down ol' Satan himself! This series could have some serious implications for our white-skinned maiden, so keep yer eyes peeled!

4. SHI #1

WRITERS: William Tucci and Peter Gutierrez
ARTISTS: William Tucci and Harvey Mercadoocasio

Great story. Great art. The logo could use a little work. Uh...hmm...did we mention how awesome this book starring a babe assassin is? And how Bill Tucci did some pretty extensive research into Japanese history for it? And how about her upcoming one-shot, where Ana Ishikawa quits her assassin gig and works as a chef in a Japanese restaurant? It's called *Su-Shi*. Bwah-hah-hah. Oh, boy. Sorry about that. It's just that we've been writing about *Shi* for like 96 straight months, and we think we just sprained our collective brain. Ow. But hey, you should definitely pick up this baby (and don't say you can't afford it, 'cause there's a second printing available right now!), and the second part of the Shi/Cyblade crossover due out in August.



THE X-FILES ™ & © Twentieth Century Fox. X-MEN: ALPHA ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group. LADY DEATH ™ & © Brian Pulido. SHI ™ & © William Elliott Tucci.

5. GEN[13] #1 (Mini-Series)

WRITER: Brandon Choi
ARTISTS: J. Scott Campbell and Alex Garner

Just like that pesky li'l pink bunny, *Gen*[13]'s stiiiiill going! You guys just love your mutants, don't ya? Well, ol' Fairchild (that's the rather large, red-headed chick on the cover) and company's very first issue is still in high demand. The popularity of the current ongoing series is only fueling the fire for these original mini-series issues, so don't expect 'em to disappear just yet! And you better believe that the 13 in *Gen*[13] doesn't stand for "only 13 months on the charts," 'cause this here particular ish first weaseled its way into Top Ten Land waaaay back in *Wizard* #33. Talk about yer generations!

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6. X-MEN: OMEGA #1

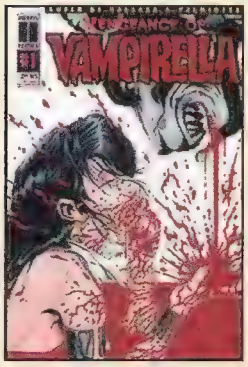
WRITERS: Scott Lobdell and Mark Waid
ARTISTS: Roger Cruz, with inkers LaRosa, Townsend, Kesel, Candelario, Hanna and Milgrom

Well, lookie here, yet another X-Men book. Like we said, you kids just love yer muties. Anyway, what *X-Men: Alpha* starts, *Omega* finishes. The entire Age o' Apocalypse thingie comes to its staggering conclusion in a giant, rock 'em sock 'em, battle royale, slugfestorama. But if ya think we'm gonna tell ya what happens, you're as disillusioned as a greased-up fanboy in a bathtub trying to read a mint copy of *Captain Carrot* #19 without getting it wet. But rest assured, the ending of this baby only spells the beginning of trouble for your friendly neighborhood X-Men. God, we sound just like a commercial.

™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

7. VENGEANCE OF VAMPIRELLA #1

WRITER: Tom Sniegoski
ARTIST: Buzz



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We guess it's true what they say, vampires just won't die. Vampi keeps poppin' up in Top Ten Land, bloody fangs and all. The "Mystery Walk" storyline running through her current issues, which reveals some pretty nifty info regarding her origins, can only be forcing new readers to jump back to this hard-to-find first issue. And whaddaya think the chances are that Vampi over there's bathing in tomato juice rather than blood? Y'know, she coulda' gotten sprayed by a skunk or something. Or it could even be strawberry Jell-O that just hasn't chilled yet. Yeah, that's it. In fact, the cover's kinda cute now. A gorgeous babe sittin' in a pool o' Jell-O.

8. X-MEN: PRIME #1

WRITERS: Scott Lobdell and Fabian Nicieza
ARTISTS: a whole mess o' pencilers and inkers

Remember alla that "Age of Apocalypse" stuff we told you about? Well, forget it all! Yep, this here issue brings the X-Men back into "our" time 'n' reality, and a few changes have occurred since you last saw the mutant team. Let's see...well, X-Man (Cable as a young punk) is now a part of our universe. As is the evil Beast, who looks a lot like the Cookie Monster on steroids. But the biggest news is that Wolverine seems to be mutatin' into his true savage self. Apparently, the adamantium in his bones had halted this savage mutation, but now that his bones are bare (so to speak), there's nuthin' to stop him from goin' completely berserk. And there's nothing worse than a berserk Wolverine. (Just ask any *Magic* player!)

™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

9. GEN[13] #1 VARIANTS (Ongoing Series)

WRITER: Brandon Choi
ARTISTS: J. Scott Campbell and Alex Garner

"INTERJECTIONS...show excitement...or emotion. They're generally set apart from a sentence by an exclamation point, or by a comma when the feeling's not as strong." Ahh, the good ol' days of *Schoolhouse Rock*. So what the hell does that have to do with Gen[13]? Well, nothing! But it's kinda catchy, ain't it? Anyway, the 11 variant covers to *Gen*[13]'s first regular issue continue to be a popular bunch. And if ya haven't seen 'em yet, check out *Wizard* #47's Top Ten, 'cause we showcased the whole lot of 'em for ya! And inside alla those funky covers is a pretty good story that brings back something to comics that's been pretty tough to locate

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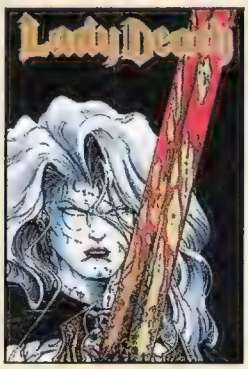
10. LADY DEATH #1

WRITER: Brian Pulido
ARTIST: Steven Hughes

Lady Death's still hot, and her first mini-series continues to rake in the dough. But you know that already (especially if you're a regular reader of this here column). So, instead of ramblin' on about why she's hot and stuff, we'll lay another joke on ya. (It'll be hard to top last month's, though.) There was a young girl from Venus, who could... Whoops, can't tell that one here. Sorry. Hmm...how about a riddle? There are three cigarettes on a boat with no matches. How do the boat riders smoke? Simple. They throw one of the cigarettes overboard, and make the boat a cigarette lighter. Get it? Well, that's it for now, kids. ☆



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Wizard Market WATCH

by **Jon Warren** and **Marc Wilkofsky**

A Touch of Vertigo

THE HOT RECENT RELEASES (1991-95)

• **Vertigo books** (DC Comics). Collectors looking for a breath of fresh back issue air can find it in the activity surrounding these off-the-norm books. ***Goddess*** and ***Preacher*** are two healthy and hard-working lungs in the company's body of reader-pleasing titles, and the unique latter series has folks flocking to stores in droves (resulting in the doubling of **#1**'s value!). Meanwhile, Vertigo's steadily pumping heart has been ***Sandman***, whose recent **#69** issue features enough momentous events to merit some major price activity. With the title's unfortunate end, though, Neil Gaiman-loving eyes are turning towards the writer's other projects, including...

• ***Angela* mini-series** (Image). Who knew that a Bad Girl series spawned (ugh!) from the comic world's megaseller *Spawn* with a story spun by hot writer Gaiman would explode? *Everybody* knew, and the mini-series' three issues (plus Angela's debut book, ***Spawn* #9**) can only soar straight up from here.

• **Tekno•Comix books**. Tekno might be the secondary market surprise of the year, having taken in many readers with its cornerstone books, Leonard Nimoy's ***Primortals*** and Neil Gaiman's (there he is again) ***Mr. Hero—The Newmatic Man***. Solidly fun worlds borne from these two respected minds have caused the current reader interest making these books feverish movers. Meanwhile, the two main reasons why loads of readers are giving ***Lady Justice*** a trial run (besides being created by that Gaiman fella) include its promising storyline, and its joining the enormous ranks of...

• **Bad Girl Books** (various publishers). Lady Death, Shi, Vampirella, Razor and Lady Rawhide still reign supreme—but the excitement is spreading to heroines like Image's Glory, Marvel's Rogue (Watch her mini-series!) and DC's Wonder Woman. By the way, of the above women, Ladies Death and Rawhide are still constant killers in the comic world, ***Shi* #5**'s Marc Silvestri-drawn variant cover edition is taking off, and big-name artists Mike Deodato Jr. and John Byrne have brought dynamic market life to Glory and WW, respectively (actually, Mike helped with both).

PREACHER™ & © DC Comics

• ***Double Impact*** (High Impact Studios). There's a new female duo out there, Girl Watchers, named China and Jazz, and they co-star in *one* book, which is somewhat innovative (or at least perfect for anybody who wants something with a touch of novelty these days). ***Double Impact* #1** features these two beautiful mercenaries on a Chromium cover as well as in an action-packed story, and reportedly had one of those tiny print runs; people are willing to pay around $8 for this one.

• ***X-Files*** (Topps Comics). The collector heat infusing this series has been almost beyond belief, with **#1** moving to a remarkable $30 this month, followed closely by the increasingly rare **#2-#5**. This wildness is quickly convincing people that as soon as each issue is out there, they've gotta scoop it up. They're absolutely right.

• **X-Men books** (Marvel). We're all aware of how hot these still are, so here's a look at the latest stand-outs: the ***Alpha***, ***Omega*** and ***Prime*** bookends (three bookends?) to the "Age of Apocalypse" epic are huge, all the **#1** "Age" books are hot (especially those of ***Astonishing X-Men***, ***Generation Next***, ***Weapon X*** and ***X-Man***), and ***Generation X* #1-#4** simply rule.

• **Image hits**. While the fury around WildStorm's ***Gen^{13}*** series is mind-numbing (and value-expanding, attested by this month's activity in both the original and ongoing titles), a few other Image studios are still in the running. Extreme has ***Prophet*** (the **#4 Platt variant** from the first series is still alive) and the aforementioned ***Glory*** to its credit, and Sam Kieth's ***The Maxx*** is enjoying heavy interest springing from the weekly MTV cartoon. Also, Mark Seifert, from Comic Cavalcade in Urbana, Ill., has this opinion: "Top Cow is the flavor of the month among Image fans. That's right, WildStorm's out, and TC books are in. Seems like the pre-release frenzy for the Cyblade/Shi crossover has found each of these heroines' books a whole new audience. Leading the way is ***Cyberforce Origins Special* #1**, featuring Cyblade, natch." WildStorm still has biggies like ***Grifter*** and ***WildC.A.T.s*** on its side, so we'll just have to wait 'n' see where the fans and their money'll go.

• **Dark Horse Watchables**. The ***Sin City***, ***Madman*** and ***Ghost*** books all over today's racks have two things in common: they're extremely strong-selling, and they're all from Dark Horse;

which is certainly living up to its name with these titles and others. "Dark Horse continues to satisfy an insatiable army of *Star Wars* fans who want more product," states Bruno Andreacchi, of Canada's B.A.'s Comics & Nostalgia. "People also can't get enough—and neither can I—of *Ghost*. Beautiful art and a great story." On the horizon: Frank Miller and Geof Darrow's *The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot* mini, and probably even more excited DH buyers.

• **Independent Sellers** (various publishers). More readers are depending on independent comics for quality and consistency, and one new place they're looking is ***THB***, an innovative, vibrantly produced series by Paul Pope (which was spotlighted in *Wizard* #40's Palmer's Picks). Teri S. Wood's engaging sci-fi creation ***Wandering Star*** (under Pen & Ink Comics) is another definite beneficiary of this gradual movement away from the Big Six, as is New England Comics' ***The Tick***, which is already a cult classic with its animated TV series behind it. This zany series may have left off in 1992, but fans are still going crazy over it (check out our newly revamped guide listing, by the way). And with news that plans call for new comics (albeit sans *Tick* creator Ben Edlund), this series might get even crazier in the back issue department.

• **DC & Marvel Slumpers**. Once hot, now not: DC's "Knightfall" and Doomsday books (fans loved 'em both, but are moving on), plus Marvel's Punisher and Ghost Rider books—a decreasing number of fans recently caused the cancellation of these two guys' titles, and a real depression in value for many issues (especially *GR*; see the Modern Age report). Also, practically any book with Death in the title is seeing a harsh price demise, including Marvel's *Deathlok* and *Death's Head II*, and DC's *Deathstroke*. Even Vertigo's *Death* mini-series was harmed by this; the platinum #1 sank a bit, although the regular one's still strong. Is this all just a coincidence? Anything's possible...

MODERN AGE SELLERS (1970-90)

• ***Sandman*** (DC). *The* hot DC title! Retailers report strong demand for all issues, but especially **#22** (the first Daniel). And at long last: *Wizard* explains in the Price Guide how to tell the difference between the two issue #8's, regular and limited! Holy editorial!

• ***Star Wars*** (Marvel). The original Marvel series is definitely burnin'! The *Empire Strikes Back* adaptation storyline in issues **#39-#44** are among the most popular in the series, moving up to $8 this month. But the big story is **#107**, the last issue in the run. Why is the book fetching as much as $100 in some areas? Darned if we know (nor do any of the retailers we surveyed; while the early Whilce Portacio art isn't exactly the reason, the general scarcity of final issues in several titles could be). It moved up to a whopping $25 this month.

• ***Wolverine*** (Marvel). Both the original mini-series and the regular series starring Marvel's main mutant are perennial best-sellers. Logan's ongoing series went up across the board this month.

• ***Amazing Spider-Man*** (Marvel). Those original clone books—#149 to #151—keep sinking fast, even though they apparently include the early apps of the Spidey/Parker we've known for 20 years, who was recently revealed to be the clone. You'll currently find as many people paying top dollar for these babies as folks who pay the "true" over-$100 prices for movie videos.

• ***Ghost Rider*** (Marvel). Prices are down across the board for this (sad to say) has-been hero. The painful death of the current, 1990-up series has unfortunately killed demand for the original

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

Photo: Al Ortega

1 **Todd McFarlane**
Spawn

Photo: Sampsel & Preston

2 **J. Scott Campbell**
Gen[13]

3 **Greg Capullo**
Spawn

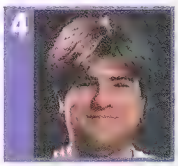
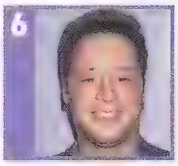


Photo: J. Schuyler

4 **Andy Kubert**
X-Men

Photo: J. Schuyler

5 **Adam Kubert**
Wolverine



6 **Joe Quesada**
Ash

7 **William Tucci**
Shi

Photo: Jon Gipe

8 **Steven Hughes**
Lady Death

Photo: Al Ortega

9 **Kelley Jones**
Batman

10 **Dale Keown**
Pitt

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST WRITERS

Photo: Al Ortega

1 **Neil Gaiman**
Sandman

Photo: Sampsel & Preston

2 **Brandon Choi**
Gen[13]

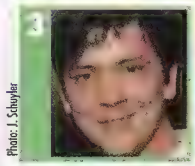


Photo: J. Schuyler

3 **Scott Lobdell**
Uncanny X-Men, Generation X

4 **Dan Jurgens**
Superman, Solar

5 **John Byrne**
Wonder Woman

6 **Peter David**
Incredible Hulk, Aquaman, Spider-Man 2099

Photo: Al Ortega

7 **Frank Miller**
The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot

8 **Chris Claremont**
Sovereign Seven

Photo: J. Schuyler

9 **Ron Marz**
Green Lantern

Photo: Al Ortega

10 **Mark Waid**
Captain America, Flash
Upcoming: *X-Men*

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS AND WRITERS LISTS ARE DERIVED FROM A NATIONWIDE RETAILER SURVEY.

Market WATCHERS

Dear Wizard,

I was wondering if you could tell me which comics have the first appearances of the following Batman villains: Killer Croc, Black Mask, the Ratcatcher, Ventriloquist and Scarface. Thanks.

Ryan Evans
Homer, MI

Ryan, you'll find Croc and Black Mask's debut in *Batman* #357 and #386, respectively, while Ratty and the Ventrilopair (Love that dummy!) came into being with *Detective* #385 and #583. Out of all of 'em, Croc (who recently returned to the Batbooks) would be the best foe for the next film, next to Poison Ivy, Scarecrow and Susan Powter.

Dear Marc Wilkofsky,

I've seen how you always print letters that ask for the values of valueless comics. Well, here's another, maybe. I have a comic book called *Personality Comics Presents: The Beatles*. It also says, "Featuring Paul McCartney." It's in black-and-white except for the cover, and I've seen it selling for $10, as well as $2.50. What's the real value?

Matt McMullan
Schenectady, NY

Hey, I don't always print letters about dead-end books. And when I do, it's often to enlighten the holders about their books' value, so they're not disappointed when they try to sell 'em. Like your Beatles bio book, Matt, which would earn you $3 (much closer to $2.50 than $10). That's one of the main reasons I was placed on your planet, so be proud.

Dear Wizard,

Can you please tell me the prices of these books, and why they're not in the guide? They're *Marvel: The Year in Review 1994*, *The Web Annual* #1 and *Blackwulf* #1. Thanks.

Nick Billings
Kodiak, AK

Speaking of valueless books...in Near Mint condition, *M:TYIR* would be $4 (if you're lucky...snicker...$5), Impact's *Web* book would be...heh...$2.50 and *Blackwulf* would also be—*Bwah ha ha!*—$2.50, at most. Sorry, Nick, I sometimes lose control when folks ask me about totally inactive books (the likes of which won't be listed in the guide till they...ha...see market action). Hey, keep sending these requests in, though!

Hey Marc,

I really can't relate to the whole polybag thing. I am now just a casual comic reader, but when I was more into the collecting scene, I never once saw a polybagged comic worth buying. Each one is all hype, and no substance—what's up with that? If you are really into comics, I imagine you'll actually *read* what you buy, so what does the aftervalue have to do with your reading enjoyment?

In closing, I'll just say that comic collectors wouldn't have to worry if they only read *Groo*, the greatest comic ever written, which not only never has any gimmicks, but makes you feel a whole lot better when you're done. Thanks.

Jon Kronser
Monmouth, OR

You know, Jon, I've been trying to think of a good-reading polybook myself, and hard-pressed is an understatement. I guess *Superman* #75—one of the few valuable ones—fits the bill. I'll bet many readers will realize that their favorite, more substantial titles (like the hilarious *Groo*) never came in a "Buy me!!" bag, but many other two-copy-poly-

(1973-83) series, as well as the latest (but, we're sure, not last) one. If the planned movie ever comes out, things may change.

• ***X-Men* #94** (Marvel). Own this book (which brought the new X-Men team into the ongoing series), ***Giant-Size X-Men* #1** and ***Incredible Hulk* #181**, and you've got yourself the "Marvel Trifecta." These are the big three of '70s Marvels. *X-Men* #94 moved up to $300 this time around. The origin and first appearance of the New X-Men happened in the Giant-Size book, which explains why it also rings in at $300, while Wolverine's full debut in the Hulk book brought it to $360—retailers report strong demand for Near Mint copies, and lots of trouble finding them. Peter Beck of Grafik XS in Westwood, N.J. notes, "I have customers requesting these three books in Mint condition and offering double guide. Many believe they'll all break the $1,000 barrier within two years."

THE INCREDIBLE HULK ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

• ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*** (Mirage). The Turtles haven't been mentioned as a hot item in a long time, and they won't be now, either. Prices are dropping; issue #2 dropped to $100 this month.

POPULAR SILVER AGE BOOKS (1955-70)

• ***Challengers of the Unknown*** (DC). Here's Jack Kirby at his 1950s best, and a semi-prototype for the Fantastic Four, to boot! (The similarities between the two teams are uncanny.) Issue **#1** moved up to $1,500 this month, and other issues moved up as well.

• ***Fantastic Four*** (Marvel). Lots of demand for the early issues is happening. Issue **#1** moved up to $13,750 this month. Of course, there's plenty of interest in high-grade copies.

• ***Flash* (first series) #105** (DC). Another of those "hard-to-find, easy-to-sell" DCs, *Flash* #105 moved up to $4,100 this month. If you think #105 is tough to find, what about #104? (Check out *Wizard* #50 for the scoop on this one.)

• ***Incredible Hulk* #1** (Marvel). The first appearance and origin of the ever-popular green giant moved up to $8,000 this month.

• ***Journey into Mystery* #83** (Marvel). The first appearance of Thor moved up to $3,300 this month. Other issues in the run headed north as well.

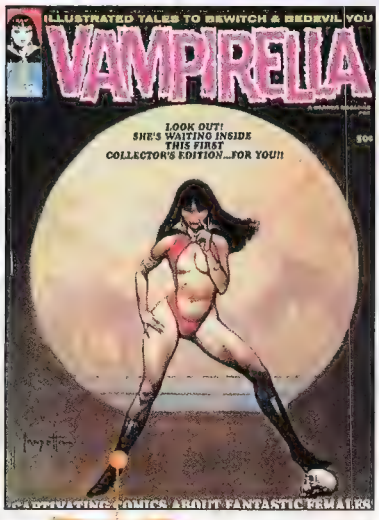
• ***Magnus Robot Fighter*** (Gold Key). The Valiant market crashed and burned, and now it's affected the original, pre-Valiant titles. Prices for *Magnus* #1-#4 fell this month, which is hopefully not the beginning of a trend towards oblivion for these Silver Age gems.

• ***Showcase* #4** (DC). The first appearance of the Silver Age Flash—in the first *Showcase* volume from decades ago—moved up this month to $19,500.

• ***Spectre*** (DC). The original series from 1967 is still hot, as is the current series. Issue **#1** moved up to $80 this month.

• ***Superboy*** (DC). Early issues of the original series continued their rising ways, with issues **#5-#38** all increasing in the price guide.

• ***X-Men*** #1 (Marvel). A still-blazing-hot Silver Age key, lots of retailers tell us they have a waiting list for high-grade copies of this 1963 book. The price moved up to $4,000 this month.



VAMPIRELLA ™ & © Harris Publications Inc.

• ***Vampirella*** (Warren). The whole series is still hot, with across-the-board increases, including issue **#1** leaping to $275.

THE GOLDEN AGE MARKET (1938-54)

It's all Batman, Batman, Batman this month! The recent *Forever* flick served to push throngs of people into theaters, McDonald's and comic stores, along with an already-powerful group of books even further up the value chart.

• **Golden Age Batman books** (DC). ***Detective Comics #27*** features the debut of Batman and sets the comic-reading public on its Bat-ears. ***Batman #1*** sees the character get his own book in the spring of 1940, and has him meet Catwoman and The Joker for the first time. ***Batman #16*** was the first appearance of Alfred. ***Detective #38*** saw the introduction and origin of Robin, who is certainly benefiting from his film debut. ***Detective #66*** features the origin and first appearance of Two-Face, another *Forever* star. And ***Detective #140*** is another super-hot (and unusually scarce) book among Batman collectors thanks to its first appearance of The Riddler. ☆

Marc Wilkofsky and Jon Warren's editor is too damn tired to write this bio.

buyers actually love being able to keep one copy "perfectly safe," and rip into the other for its various contents. I once ripped up a *Thundercats* myself for fun, so I know how liberating it feels.

Dear Market Watchers,

I bought a comic book from my brother a couple of years ago, when he tried to sell it in a garage sale. The comic is called *Stupid* (the name fits it perfectly), and it's by Image. Even though it's dumb, it's pretty funny, and I was wondering if you could tell me two things. 1) I have the first issue, and I'd like to know if there are any more; 2) How much is my comic worth? I asked the guy at the comic store I go to if he had any other *Stupids*, so I could get an idea of the value, and he just said no. (He's like the lifeless guy Adam Mica Heald described in *Wizard* #46's Market Watchers.) Thanks a bundle!

Diane Livio
Torrance, CA

There's only one *Stupid* issue—worth cover price at most, $1.95—'cause this fun series was abruptly canceled in Image's '93 clean-out of late titles by non-founders. You're welcome a bundle, Diane!

Hey Marc,

Last weekend I went to the local flea market, where I saw a bunch of comics for 25 cents. While looking through them, two caught my eye immediately: *Tank Girl* #1 and #2, both published by Dark Horse Comics.

If you can tell me how much they're worth, then you are Da Man.

Please print this,

Jeremy Carpenter
Walton, KY

Love those flea markets—bargain central! Well, you probably have the first *TG* series (Otherwise you'd've said "*Tank Girl 2*," right?), so you've got a $5 book and a $3.50 one, respectively—whatta double buy, Jeremy! (Or *did* you buy 'em?)

Dear Marc,

Your question in issue #44: Can we afford back issues these days? The answer: Absolutely NOT!

Since 1989, I've seen dramatic changes in the comic industry, and mostly unlikable ones—i.e., they all center around the Almighty Buck, not quality! For instance, some of this new digital stuff is just plain CRAP! Another problem is when companies like Defiant, Dagger, etc. put out a lot of comics and then go belly up—which obviously makes their products worthless. I also don't like the recent trend of rising cover prices, allegedly due to higher paper costs and the "need" for new types of paper and printing, nor the trend of putting a great cover from a good artist on a book with a crappy story and low-quality art inside; this is a pure rip-off for the price.

What's obvious is that everyone in the industry wants bigger paychecks, and comics are no longer designed for kids price-wise. At present, I've been collecting several major titles from many companies, costing a lot per month and leaving me zip for back issues. Even after I soon cut off several Marvel and DC titles (in response to one of the above trends), back issues will be hard to squeeze out money for. One other problem with obtaining back issues is the great degree of scarcity of many old comics, like old *Thors* and *Captain Marvels*, in good condition.

Well, I hope this adequately answers the question. Thanks for your time.

Steven H. Jenkins
Wilmington, CA

It sure did, Steven. I hope collecting gets easier and more enjoyable for you, but I doubt it will.

And another column chomps on the merciless dust. Thanks to everyone for taking the time to write, and be here next time for the 50th issue Market Watchers spectacular celebration extravaganza!

—Marc Wilkofsky
Getting Unusually Excited

Hey, Market Watchers! Send your letters to:
MARKET WATCHERS
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Todd's Sensitive Side

by Todd McFarlane

One non-comic book question that's always posed to me by fans is, "What movies do you like?" I think fans are somewhat surprised by my answer that I'm not a big fan of action or sci-fi blockbuster movies.

In 1977, I went and saw *Star Wars*. I haven't seen the two follow-up sequels, namely *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. I haven't seen any of the seven *Star Trek* movies, *True Lies*, *Cliffhanger*, *Last Action Hero*, etc. I've seen the first Indiana Jones movie, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, but not the other two. I've seen very little of the first *Die Hard*, but not the others.

What I'm getting at here is this question: Why should I go see a movie with big guns and explosions and spaceships when I can draw that stuff whenever I want to? It's like working at a chocolate factory and going home to eat a little fudge. When I come away from my drawing board, I need a little dose of reality. I have an interest in movies that have stories that are described as The Great American Novel. Since I know I'll never write The Great American Novel, I admire those that can.

Some of the best movies I've seen have a rich quality to them. Movies like *When Harry Met Sally*, *The Color Purple* (which had great cinematography and was very adept at weaving a large cast in and out of the film), *Nuts* with Barbra Streisand (you didn't know the whole story until the very end) and *Radio Flyer* (which is about child abuse) are all true-life reality flicks. The last good movie I've seen is *The Shawshank Redemption*, a character-driven movie. In terms of dialogue, lighting and the way the camera moved, if Hollywood was to let me do movies, I'd do my best to have them look this way.

Whenever I see an action movie, I just sit there and re-edit it. Like a bad director, I'd say, "He wouldn't do that."

One of the most frustrating movies I've seen lately is *Speed*. I mean, what a crock. You've got a cop trying to defuse a bomb on a runaway bus that has twenty or so people on it. And it seemed more like a party. Not once did I feel afraid for those people, because they were having too good a time. People were cracking jokes—and if there's one thing I just hate in a movie, it's that at a time of tension or crisis, the first thing someone utters is a joke. If I were on a runaway bus with a bomb on it, my first concern would be for my wife and kids, and maybe about four weeks later I'd crack my first joke. I consider myself a fairly happy-go-lucky guy (when I'm not doing snotty interviews), and I don't understand how people stuck on a deathtrap would crack jokes. OK, maybe one guy can joke, but in *Speed*, everyone had their token joke. Maybe it's because I'm just a little bit terrified of dying that I take this so seriously, but it numbs the credibility of the film in my mind.

Well, enough of my chatter. If you have certain tastes in movies and care to share 'em with me, write to me at the address in *Spawn*. And in the meantime, thanks for reading, and take care. ☆

Todd McFarlane is a co-founder of Image Comics, and is the writer and co-artist of Spawn.

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*EVERYONE'S GOT OPINIONS

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of *Wizard: The Guide to Comics*, its editorial staff, or Image Comics.

Wizard Bullpen

WINK, WINK. NUDGE, NUDGE. KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

Secret meetings are taking place behind closed doors. For the past six months, the men and women who bring you *Wizard* each and every month sat huddled around stacks of notes, surveys and outlines, pouring over every scrap of data, making sweeping, far-reaching changes. The newly-formed Wizard Press Art Department, headed up by *Wizard: The Guide to Comics* Art Director Matt Tierney, is working around the clock, throwing pages on the drawing board, gearing up for the massive overhaul. Stephen Shamus, heading up the new in-house team of Price Guide researchers, is busy expanding the retailer network and revamping both the Comic Book and Trading Card Price Guides. Dozens of people, working hundreds of hours, all headed towards the same goal. It's *Wizard* #50, and it hits in 30 days.

YOUR (USER) FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD WIZARD WORLD!

You always knew *Wizard* was the coolest magazine on the newsstands. Now everybody who owns a computer is going to learn what *you* already know.

On June 14, *Wizard: The Guide to Comics* officially launched "Wizard World," an interactive comic book forum on the America Online network.

The best part is: it's totally *Wizard*. Flashy graphics, cool downloads, an unbeatable Comic Price Guide...and that's just for starters.

You can talk with *Wizard* editors and writers, as well as fellow comic fans. Top creators are already hanging out on the forum talking about their comics.

America Online users can read many *Wizard* news and feature articles, as well the magazine's popular sections including Magic Words, Toying Around, Picks from the Wizard's Hat and E.G.O. You can even download all the covers to back issues of *Wizard*.

The forum also features special "online exclusives," including special articles and contests! Last month, we gave away the original art for the cover to *Creed* #1 by Trent Kaniuga and the original art for the cover of the all-new *Punisher* #1 by Tom Lyle. Wizard World also features *Wizard*'s famous Price Guide with more than 30,000 comic prices per month.

Wizard World is available only on America Online. Just type Keyword: **Wizard** and you're there!

For a free 10-hour trial of America Online, call (800) 754-4400.

WHO ARE YOU?

ERIC

Official *Wizard* groundhog (Groundhogicus-maximus) and mascot

In case you're wondering just who the hell this Eric character is, he's our furry resident groundhog who hangs around the lawn outside our offices here in Congers. He's been mentioned a few times in *Wizard*, and you probably had no idea who he was. And even though we still haven't gotten any photos of him yet, we were able to secure an interview with the li'l guy.

What is it you do at *Wizard*?

Not much anymore. A couple of months back, me and Shamus had a falling out over who came up with the idea for ProGard, and maybe I had one too many at lunch or somethin', but POW, I laid him flat on his ass. Now I just hang around on the lawn, eat and try to catch something slow enough to mate with.

What are your hobbies?

Learning different ways to prepare my young before I eat them. I've also got the entire set of Time Life Books' *History of the Terrible Lizards*.

Favorite comic series?

Cherry Poptart. Boy, I wouldn't mind CENSOREDCENSORED CENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSORED CENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSORED CENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSORED. *Bone*'s good, too. Heck, that li'l' guy's so cute, I wouldn't mind CENSOREDCENSORED CENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSORED CENSOREDCENSOREDCENSOREDCENSORED him, either.

Accomplishment of which you are most proud?

Every day when Gareb comes in and parks his car, I sneak up to his Lexus and mark the hell out of it with my scent.

Who would play you in a movie?

DeNiro. The range he displays is awesome. While many had pigeonholed him as only a tough guy/mobster actor, he gave powerful, thought-provoking performances as the catatonic man in *Awakenings*, and the hopeless, tortured in Coppola's *Frankenstein*. Or maybe Wings Hauser.

Any advice for *Wizard* readers?

Yeah, keep on buying *Wizard*, it's great! (The preceding was a paid endorsement from Wizard Press and Gareb Shamus Enterprises. Eric the Groundhog received monetary reimbursement for all statements made.)

What would you like people to know about you?

I may not be human, but I have feelings. I know what it's like to lie awake at night alone, wishing I had someone to hold. To look up at the night sky and wonder if there is a God, and if so, why has he seemingly forsaken us? Oh, and if any of you've got a sister, hook me up.

Top 10 Batman Action Figures that didn't quite make it:

10. Bosnian-Serb Batman with "Blow-Your-Ass-Away!" action.
9. Ebola-Infected Batman with real squeeze-and-pop action!
8. Batman of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police with 80 lbs. of Bacon action accessory.
7. Bullet-Riddled Thomas & Martha Wayne inaction figures.
6. Victoria's Secret Batman (free with purchase of Fancy Miracle Bra).
5. Action "O.J." Batman with white Ford Bronco Batmobile (Kato Kaelin Robin mail-away offer).
4. Intestinal-Distress Batman with action Bat-Tapeworm.
3. Pantsless Alfred.
2. Blind-Drunk-and-Giggling-like-a-Schoolgirl Batman.
1. "Sweet-Jesus-Where's-the-Bathroom?" Batman with Fear-of-God Bat-Expression.

INQUEST #5

Learn how to **break into the gaming market**, including all the do's and don'ts of submitting—and following up on—your ideas to publishers! Then we'll tell you exactly **how to build a *Magic* deck** and uncover the secrets of the **Tournament Survival Kit!** We also check out **Alter Ego**, Wizards of the Coast's new role-playing division, and look into the reality behind fantasy worlds, including what castle life and being a knight is *really* like. And that's not all: we're introducing a **game review column** (starting with our take on *Marvel OverPower*, *Powercardz* and *Rage*) and an **online gaming column**, and we've expanded and improved our Price Guide and Stumpers (*Magic* Q & A) section! *Plus*, you can **win a complete WildStorm card game set**, and original art by Jill Thompson from **Comico's *Chrysalis* set**! *And* we threw in an **exclusive *Star Quest* card** from Comic Images, a ***Spawn Powercardz* card**, and a card from the first expansion set for **White Wolf's *Rage***! Whew! And it's still just...**$3.50**

Illustration by Brian Cunningham

WIZARD: THE GUIDE TO COMICS volume one, forty-nine (49), September 1995.

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WIZARD Profile

Here's looking at...KEVIN DOOLEY

by Marc Shapiro

When it gets down to crunch time in the hallowed halls of DC Comics, writers and illustrators pretty much know what they're going to get when Kevin Dooley enters the room.

"My philosophy is what's going to be best for the comic and, in particular, the story and the characters," says the 42-year-old DC editor. "I'm more in favor of enhancing a good character than merely throwing in another fight scene."

Dooley, currently riding roughshod over *Green Lantern*, *Aquaman* and *Outsiders*, was born in Flushing, N.Y., was raised a DC Comics loyalist and went to college in California. He laughingly recalls that the first 10 years of his working life were pure hell. "I wrote junk mail copy for 10 years. I was the guy who wrote the crap that convinced people to buy stuff they really didn't need. I had finally reached a point where I was getting ready to get a high-powered scope rifle and start picking people off, so I quit, took a job in a bookstore, took a $20,000 pay cut and was never happier in my life."

Until he spied an item in the comic book fanzine *Amazing Heroes* looking for writers. In typical Dooley fashion, he responded with an article, three more article ideas and a whole slew of suggestions on how to improve the magazine. "Then one day, the editor Kim Thompson called me up and asked me if I wanted a job."

Dooley edited *Amazing Heroes* for a year before making the acquaintance of DC Comics editor Andrew Helfer, which resulted in the offer of an assistant editor's job at DC. He jumped at the chance and soon found himself making editorial sense of such books as *Justice League America*, *The Spectre*, *Mr. Miracle* and *The New Guardians*. "I moved up to associate editor, and when Andy left [for DC's Piranha Press imprint], I was kicked upstairs to handle *Green Lantern*, because everybody felt I have a superhero bent."

Dooley, who is married to a Marvel Comics employee, Tamara Brown, and can be accused of sleeping with the enemy, spends his free time at the mountains, the beach and in a lot of darkened rooms. "I live to go to the movies and to go to the theater. I like to read, and not just comics, but real science books and books on philosophy. I also like it a lot when it's just plain quiet."

But, ultimately, Kevin Dooley just plain likes being an editor. "Even when I was a kid, I wanted to be an editor. I never wanted to be the writer or the guy who drew the books. I always wanted to be more a part of the directorial process. And no," he laughs, "I'm not lying."

GREEN LANTERN ™ & © DC Comics. Photo courtesy of DC Comics.

First comic read...
[DC's] *Mystery in Space*, with Adam Strange. My brother actually read it to me, and I kept stopping him and pointing out all the story problems.

Favorite comic of all time...
The Shadow, as done by [writer] Denny O'Neil and [artist] Mike Kaluta. That was really good stuff.

Favorite work of your own...
My daughters, Jamie and Julie.

Comics you currently read...
Impulse, *Flash*, *Groo*, *Bone*, *Hate*, *Daredevil*, *Lobo*, and the Batman and Superman titles.

Favorite comic character...
Green Lantern, because his main power was always linked to his imagination.

The one person you'd like to meet...
Either [actress] Joyce DeWitt from *Three's Company* or [author] Bertrand Russell. In fact, having dinner with both of them would be real interesting.

Superpower you would most want...
The ability to make people feel better about themselves.

Nicknames you have...
My brother calls me Stymie, because when I was a kid, I once rolled down a hill inside a tire, like Stymie in *The Little Rascals*.

Favorite munchie at 2 a.m....
SnackWell's fudge cookies and milk.

Things you collect...
Comic books, and books by Bertrand Russell.

Favorite pastime or hobby...
Playing the guitar and reading.

Favorite cartoon...
That has to be Bugs Bunny's "Falling Hare." The funniest scene is when the plane's going down, and Bugs is going: "Eee! Ooh! Eee!" I could see that scene 10,000 times, and still laugh.

Last good book you read...
The Day of the Piglet, by Benjamin Hoff

Last good movie you saw...
Die Hard With A Vengeance

Person who would play you in a movie...
Peter Scolari, from *Bosom Buddies* and *Newhart*.

If you had the power of the Beyonder...
I'd see beyond people's faults to what they're really like. ☆

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POINTS 5

GRAIL™ C5 R4 D5
"We're going to have to fight our way out."
Joel Alonday – WetWorks #1
SKILLS Tech 2
POWERS Subterfuge
TEAM WetWorks
POINTS 4

FAIRCHILD C6 R3 D6
"I'm on my way."
Caitlin Fairchild – Gen13 #2
SKILLS (Psi 4) Tech 3 Thrown Objects 5
POWERS Leadership
TEAM Gen13
POINTS 5

Coming in August from WildStorm Productions!

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